

BLACK FLAG

FOR ANARCHIST RESISTANCE



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**For a social system
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against state control
and all forms of govern-
ment and economic
repression. To establish
a share in the general
prosperity for all - the
breaking down of racial,
religious, national and
sex barriers - and to
fight for the life of one
world**

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editorial

THIS ISSUE features more than usual from home, something we are pleased about. A quarterly magazine like Black Flag can never cover all the resistance going on, but it's good to print some concrete news on what anarchists are doing in this country.

One of the most important issues covered in this edition is the sentencing of the three *Green Anarchist* editors to prison terms. Regular readers will be aware that we don't always see eye to eye with *Green Anarchist*, but this is a clear case of the State trying to stifle free speech and the reporting of direct actions. We have reported such things before, and will do so in the future. We urge all our readers to send their solidarity to the GA editors in prison and to join in the campaign.

We feature a lengthy article that recounts the history of Chilean anarchism, that we learned a lot from and we hope you are similarly inspired by their courage. We look at what Labour's agenda is towards the poor and working class, and, unlike the Socialist Workers, we can say "We didn't vote for this".

There is another in-depth look at movements in the world economy, this time on what's happening to the Far Eastern economies.

Also in this issue we have two more contributions to the debate on organisation, from very different perspectives, as well as a raft of adverts for different national meetings (next to the letters page).

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solidarity with green anarchist

3 OF THE 4 defendants in the *Green Anarchist* trial were convicted on November 13th 1997 and sentenced to 3 years. They have been convicted of "conspiracy to incite persons unknown to commit criminal damage". The prosecution could never say which persons or what damage. The charges were based on GA's reports of direct action and sabotage.

Common sense says that publishing reports of actions cannot be incitement, this was not the reason for the charges. The police operation leading up to the arrests took millions of pounds and involved 55 raids on activists. It is clear that the GANDALF defendants (GA and ALF) were being set up to attempt to hit the Ani-

mal Liberation Front and intimidate the growing direct action movement. The trial was bizarre, the attitude of the judge clearly prejudiced. The sentences were vindictive and intended in themselves to intimidate.

Solidarity for Noel, Saxon, and Steve, the three who have been imprisoned is growing. Two more, Robin Webb, ALF press officer and Paul Rogers, another GA editor, are due for trial in the spring. London Gandalf Support Group has been set up to spread solidarity with the defendants and defiance against the state. *Index Against Censorship*, usually more concerned with liberal causes in far off countries, are disseminating many of the direct action reports. There is no real dif-

ference between people being jailed for producing opposition newspapers here or in China, except for the prison food. The support group are calling for Amnesty International and Liberty to throw their support behind the defendants. A "liberation tour" of towns and cities in Britain is planned.

Meanwhile direct action, incited or not, continues.

Write to the 3 prisoners:

Noel Molland (CK4321) and Saxon Wood (CK4322), HMP Guys March, Shaftesbury, Dorset, SP7 OAH.

Steve Booth (CK4323), HMP Lancaster, The Castle, Lancaster, LA1 1YL.

Gandalf Defendant's Campaign, PO Box 66, Stevenage, SG1 2TR.

London Gandalf Support Group, c/o London Greenpeace, 38 Mount Pleasant, London, WC1X OAP.

Updates on www.cbuzz.co.uk/SchNEWS

Diarmuid O' Neill

IN SEPTEMBER 1996 Diarmuid O'Neill, an IRA member under observation by the security forces, was shot and killed by Special Branch and armed police when they raided an address in Hammersmith. After being shot, Diarmuid was denied paramedic assistance for 25 minutes, by which time he was dead. One policeman was seen standing with his foot on Diarmuid's head as he lay dying. Diarmuid was dragged bleeding out of the house into the street, where he lay, bleeding from the bullet wounds.

The killing was carried out as part of a raid on an IRA active service unit. In December Patrick Kelly, James Murphy and Brian McHugh were gaoled for conspiracy to cause explosions.

Evidence at the trial made it clear that Special Branch were fully aware that Diarmuid was not likely to be armed. They had already bugged the flat and his car. They had the unit under constant surveillance, including at the Hornsey warehouse they used to store arms and explosives. When the police opened fire on Diarmuid he had already showed both his hands clearly through the door of the flat, and Patrick Kelly had shouted

"We give up-we are unarmed". The other members of the unit recall the police shouting "Shoot the fucker" as Diarmuid opened the door.

In September 1996 the British state transferred its shoot to kill policy against Republicans from the six counties to the streets of London. If the cops that day weren't hyped up to kill, why did they

watch footage of the entirely unrelated Canary Wharf bombing and footage of bomb victims before carrying out the raid? Why did they attempt an immediate cover up by releasing reports of a "gun battle with terrorists" when there had never been a gun battle? The Justice for Diarmuid O'Neill Campaign has called for a public enquiry into the killing.

taking on the dole bullies

ON THE morning of 11 February 1998 Edinburgh Sheriff Court sentenced a claimant to 150 hours community service for delivering an Edinburgh Claimants "3 Strikes" warning letter to a Benefits Office official at High Riggs Unemployment benefit office. Four hours later 20 claimants and supporters carried out a 3rd Strike action against Marianne MacDonald, a Project Work interviewer at High Riggs, and her manager Mr Laird.

Demonstrators - all wearing masks consisting of Marianne MacDonald's face! - stormed into the benefit office in

central Edinburgh. They carried posters of MacDonald with the words NO ONE LIKES A BULLY. Protesters gave out leaflets bearing MacDonald's photo and detailing how she had consistently harassed claimants and tried to cut their benefits on 8 documented occasions.

The leaflets denounced Labour's New Deal as 'compulsory slave labour' and condemned the cuts in single parent's benefits.

Police arrived but too late to stop the action. There were no arrests. Edin-

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end of the road for the 'peace process'?

ON SATURDAY 27th December an Irish National Liberation Army team killed "King Rat" Billy Wright, leader of the Loyalist Volunteer Force. The shooting was the more audacious for being carried out inside Long Kesh, with the gunmen scaling down from the roof of one of the H-Blocks to fire at Wright as he was transported to the visiting area.

Wright's death brought a predictably sectarian response from the dregs of the LVF. They randomly opened fire at the Glengannon Hotel, killing one of the door-men, Seamus Dillon, and wounding others. They followed this up with a similar attack on the Clifton Tavern, killing 31 year old Eddie Treanor. The LVF described these attacks as a "tribute" to Wright's memory. After all, as Wright himself believed, any Taig will do. Billy Wright was Loyalism incarnate-pumped full of supremacist religious bullshit (Wright was a teetotal born again Christian) - his sole political objective was to terrorise the nationalist community into accepting the discriminatory, anti-democratic status quo of the six county state.

Wright never accepted the peace process. He believed his Loyalist heritage and "culture" was being stolen away. This meant that nationalists were no longer prepared to let mobs of bigots march through their estates unchallenged. The LVF's defence of its cultural heritage included the killing of Michael McGoldrick, a Catholic taxi driver, whose crime was to be a Catholic in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Mo Mowlem, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, is talking of "testing times in the months ahead", but for the nationalist communities the "testing times" have never gone away. In the last 18 months 8 Catholics have been murdered by Loyalists, while British politicians have praised the Loyalist paramilitaries for the maintenance of their ceasefire!! John Slane was shot 5 times in a murder off the Falls Road. In April a gang of over 30 Loyalists in Portadown killed Robert Hamill, while the RUC looked on. In July, a gunman murdered 18 year old Bernadette Martin because she was a Catholic who dared to sleep with

her Protestant boyfriend in a Protestant area. Later the same month, the mutilated body of James Morgan was retrieved from an animal carcass pit. Gaelic Athletic Association members Gerry Devlin and Sean Brown were murdered after the Mid Ulster UVF (LVF) targeted GAA officials in response to the rerouting of Orange marches. Sinn Fein offices in New Lodge, the Falls Road, Derry and Monaghan were bombed. Churches were set alight, with St MacNissis in Co. Antrim totally destroyed.

Following the murder of Eddie Treanor, eye witnesses reported seeing the car used in the attack driving away at speed with a woman "squealing with delight" in the backseat. They also reported seeing a well known UFF member in the car. It is certainly the case that the mid Ulster-based LVF could not have pulled off an attack in Belfast without either support from the UDA or UFF or, at least, without having made inroads into their membership. According to the "Progressive Unionist's" Billy Hutchinson the peace process is in crisis because of "concessions to republicans" in any event. Quite what these concessions are remains to be seen. So far, Sinn Fein have been admitted to talks having signed up to the Mitchell Principles and on the basis that the IRA ceasefire has held. Perhaps Billy has a problem with anyone sitting down to talk with democratically elected nationalists? Perhaps he has a hang up about prisoners in the 26 counties being given early release dates? Maybe 6-county born Loyalists should apply for transfer to the south then? Or do the PUP want to be able to decide penal policy in the south without having cross border decision making processes in the 6 counties? Plainly, the UDA and UVF are gearing up to formally abandon their "cease fire" rather than concede a hint of democracy through the talks, and Wright's death is to be their excuse.

Billy Wright and the LVF didn't even pretend to engage with the peace process. Their reward for refusing to cease their butchery was face to face meetings with Mo Mowlem and David Trimble. There are 2 possible explanations for this. Either the likes of Mowlem and Trimble sim-

ply think murders of nationalists are irrelevant, or they think that the LVF provide a useful incentive, a bloody reminder to the nationalist community of what might unfold if the peace process fails. Either way, Billy Wright, in life, was proof of the sectarian nature of the Northern state- in refusing to say anything more than "no", in carrying out sectarian assassinations to block the path to change with nationalist corpses, Wright, a murderer and a bigot, was courted by the political establishment in London and Dublin as his reward.

Mark Barnsley support group

THE LAW on drink and violence is as follows: if you're working class, you're guilty. If you are a public schoolboy you can knife someone and get away with murder. If you are a pissed up student, it's just high spirits.

Mark Barnsley is a 33 year old writer from Sheffield who has been sent down for 12 years for assault. In June 1994 he went out to a pub with his baby daughter and a friend. 15 drunk students came into the beer garden and started abusing his friend and they decided to leave. Tying to get out they were hassled and when Mark turned to argue they were attacked. One of the students pulled a knife but dropped it and Mark got hold of it. By the end of a long struggle Mark and 5 of the students had received knife injuries. It was Mark who was charged with assault.

After a trial where the CPS and police withheld and fabricated evidence he was convicted. A campaign has been set up to support him and overturn the conviction.

For more information contact the Mark Barnsley Support Group, PO Box 567, Sheffield S5 0YS. They have very little money so send at least some stamps to cover postage of their leaflet and newsletter.

opencast mine put out of action

AS PART OF the campaign against open cast mining, an opencast mine was occupied and put out of action on Halloween last year. Hundreds of thousands of pounds worth of damage was inflicted on the mine in a well planned and effective action. The ease with which the mine was invaded was amazing and shows you really can get the bastards - we think of them as omnipotent a lot of the time and it was inspiring to see how vulnerable a lot of their operations are to determined sabotage.

The attitude of the workers to the trashing of the mine was mixed but many responded by sitting in their hut drinking tea and cheering whenever a big piece of machinery hit the deck.

I'm writing this article from the perspective of what it's like taking part in an action - an effective action, a direct conflict, an attack on the other side. I'm leaving out arguments about the politics and issues of the particular protest i.e. opposition to opencast mining. The contempt opencast mining bosses show for local democracy, the environment, workers lives, casualisation of labour etc. I take as being self evident. This article is more like a long version of the Tin Tin T-shirt, the one saying "Fuck! we're really doing it!"

The disorganisers had obviously put this thing together on a shoe string, with enthusiasm, a little experience and a sense of mischievous fun. Fairly careful plans had been taken to avoid unwanted ears getting info on the important wheres and whens of the main battle plan - achieved through decoys and last minute changes of plan. There were precautions against infiltrators and also there were a good sprinkling of novices (including me) and possible incompetents (e.g. people with video cameras).

When we first arrived we were woken on the coach with bars of chocolate being handed out and a bottle of duty free being handed around (nice touch that - robbing banks high on scooby snacks). Then out into the cold - this had been one of my main concerns, apart from being ar-

rested, and so I was suitably toggled - long johns etc. We had to crouch down behind a hedge for a while as there seemed to be quite a bit of traffic which we later found out were our own scouts! The time came to go over the top, march on to face the music. People started to go off in different directions towards machinery. One worker was driving around and was given a leaflet. He came over towards us at the bottom of a cliff "what's the point of this eh? Can't you speak?" No we couldn't. We didn't really know what we were there for or what we were doing. After this I was thinking well that's the excitement over, a few people will just lock their necks to dumptrucks and the rest of the day will be boring. This view was soon dispelled.

There were some amongst our ranks who had a real purpose and were setting about executing it in a very impressive and together way. Methodically destroying trucks and equipment. "I'm not sure they should be doing this" said my mate at first, but after witnessing these uber terrorists in action for a while "I can't believe we're getting away with this" as he set off his third fire extinguisher.

The impression I initially had was that we'd be taking the site and occupying it. Maybe someone would talk to the media, blah blah blah, but some fun would be had. Little did I know just how much fun it actually would be. As each piece of equipment was systematically decommissioned spirits lifted. There were moments of farce too when a gang of about thirty anarchists were trying to throw this great lighting pylon down a cliff. Most of us were on the other side of the ravine watching for over half an hour as it moved towards its destiny. Nearly there, oh no, nearly, oh fuck it - and off they all went - "no - come back!" and back they all came to try again.

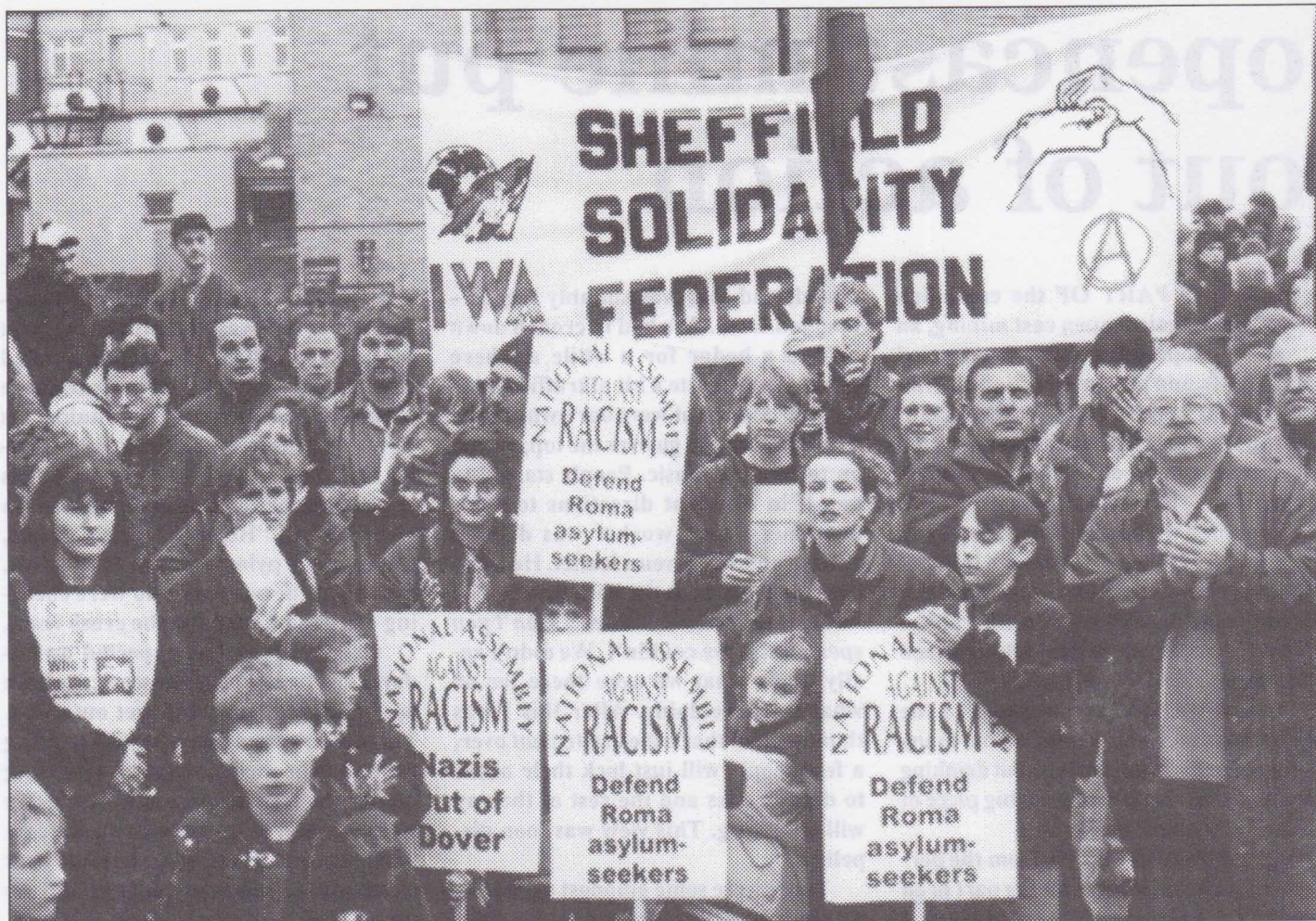
By this time lots more workers had turned up for their shift and seemed mostly quite entertained by the change to their working day. Though one guy completely lost his rag when he heard a window getting it. "Oh! Someone's got to fuckin'

pay for that" as he marched over throwing rocks (he was an impressive shot too). He was 'peacefully' surrounded until he cooled down a bit and saw there wasn't any mileage in continuing his strop, and off he went, to leave the pixies to get on with their business. This was the exception as far as opposition went. Crash! "Hooray!" when, at last, the lighting pylon went over the cliff. But it was the workers who were cheering - as good a sound as the crash itself.

Originally we had expected an all-dayer, but by 10 o'clock we seemed to have accomplished what we'd set out to do. There didn't seem much point in hanging around to be nicked, so after a meeting outside the front gate we left. Besides we were hungry, so we went down the cafe for a breakfast. There were some who went off and did get arrested but I couldn't see the point.

One of the good bits of planning was that it was in Derbyshire, it being public knowledge that the cops here were bankrupt, and always bottom in the cop league tables (or however they rate the pigs now). Their cars keep breaking down apparently and have to be left without repairs. So we knew the chance of a crack response unit arriving in the nick of time was minimal, and when they did a right disheartened and motley crew they turned out to be.

The bastards who own opencast mines are wide open, it's only through years of victory that they've become so complacent about ripping us off. But it would be quite easy, really effective and of course very worthwhile, to organise into small cells and rip the shit out of these operations. The very least it can do is force them to use profits to pay for extra security, delays and repairs. But ultimately it could have the effect of substantially worrying these fat cats into retreat and stop them taking the piss quite so blatantly. Victory on the scale of the apparent success of the roads protest where 2/3rds of the national program has been scrapped and the last 1/3rd is under review (with some exceptions admittedly) could be ours if we seize the opportunity.



asylum seekers in dover

THE ARRIVAL of the Roma asylum seekers from the Czech and Slovak republics at the end of last year exposed the racism of New Labour and their collusion with rise of the far right in central Europe. The BNP and NF's attempts to capitalise on this reminded us of another danger. Standing against all this was the response of local people, anarchists, socialists and, mostly, people who wouldn't go near a political meeting. It is, however, clear that the Roma have not stood alone against the state and the fascists in central Europe. Human rights reports note the anti-fascist activity of anarchist groups and, most importantly, the collaboration between Roma and anarchist activists against the fascist groups. The following two articles, one from *Solidarita*, a Czech libertarian socialist group, and the other from an activist in Dover report from both ends. The conclusions are clear. There is no change under New Labour, the fascists' attempts to match their European allies can be opposed successfully here and support for anti-fascists in the former Eastern Bloc is crucial. Finally, when the Labour government is locking up Roma and bending their own rules in trying to deport them, how do we distinguish between them and the BNP? Food for thought come the local elections.

1. Gipsies are forced to leave the Czech republic because they suffer terrible social and civil discrimination based on their ethnicity. They are not economic refugees! They do not try to abuse hospitality of your country.

2. Gipsies used to lead the life of either nomadic artisans, settled artisans or peasants in the territory of former Czechoslovakia. Their different and independent culture and lifestyle meant they appeared useless to the ruling classes who constantly persecuted and spread racism against them amongst ordinary people. The first Czechoslovak republic was not much better in this respect than the Austro-Hungarian empire. The Nazis tried to exterminate the "gipsy scum" and so several thousand gipsies were murdered in concentration camps with a lot of help from the Czech authorities. The Communist

regime did the most for integration of the gipsy community but for its own reasons. Stalinism required a cheap unskilled labour force rather than new technology, to do the work no Czech workers were willing to do. Ghettos were built in industrial centres and gipsies were forced to settle there, to go to work and school. The aim of their schooling was to better fit them for unskilled, cheap labour. Many gipsy children could not speak Czech very well, were not able to catch up with "white" children in their classes and were sent to special schools which ensured that they could not obtain anything better than basic or vocational education. Their culture and history were meant to have been destroyed and in this way a complete assimilation accomplished.

3. The reconstruction of market capitalism in our country meant for Czech gipsies another disaster. Gipsies as unskilled labourers were the first to lose their jobs and new private employers were not interested in them - there was a surplus of skilled white workers, who were ready to work for the wages of unskilled ones. Gipsies were also a despised black minority so it was much easier to sacrifice them than to sack majority white workers. The educational system did not offer Gipsies anything better: Quite the opposite. It is underfunded and even worse than it used to be. So the old discrimination has continued and gipsies are now trapped in a vicious circle of unemployment (70% of their community are unemployed), which leads to a decay of traditional community values and the ghettos consequently sink into crime, drugs, prostitution and desperation. These negative effects of discrimination cause even more xenophobia and rage from the white population. It means they are barred from pubs just because they are gipsies (*sound familiar?*), they are the targets of frequent attacks by Nazi gangs, they are bullied by the police and bureaucrats, they are afraid to send their children to schools and nurseries.

4. Disastrous summer floods which

killed 46 people and left thousands homeless or without their belongings, brought perhaps the worst wave of xenophobia and racism towards Gipsies. It was much easier for the mass media and people to scapegoat a powerless minority for looting, abusing humanitarian aid etc. (most cases were fabricated) than to blame real causes of the misery; the state's inability and unwillingness to help adequately the victims; bureaucrats abusing their power and humanitarian aid; owners of shops

community and cultural programmes. It cannot secure that the gipsy minority will not be sacrificed again in the interests of the ruling capitalist class, that it will not be used again to divide working class people and divert them from struggling against real enemies and real problems. It cannot secure real equality and freedom for all - Gipsies and (other) Czechs.

7. Of course emigration is not a solution either, although it forced the government make certain positive concessions. An overwhelming majority of Czech gipsies are so poor that they cannot afford to leave the country so they are starting to fight back. They are not

Solidarita's statement on the gipsy emigration November 1997

overpricing goods; a market system which ditched the old emergency system because it was too expensive and had swapped environmental safeguards for profit. In this atmosphere of hatred a mass emigration started.

5. Politicians of all parties - left and right - have always used gipsies as scapegoats for crime, the housing shortage and cuts in social benefits. In this way they have assisted in creating a xenophobic atmosphere that allowed a rise of racism and of fascist organisations. Members or supporters of these organisations have murdered about 20 gipsies, anti-fascists or foreigners since 1990. Politicians and the state have turned a blind eye to this all the time.

6. Now the British threat of visas for Czech citizens (it would delay our membership of EU and NATO) forced the government to act. They are admitting that there is discrimination and racism in our country, but do not want to admit that the state practises discrimination as well. They are promising to start to resolve the problems of the gipsy communities, but gipsies haven't the slightest reason to believe them. The new solutions could possibly bring equality in access to education and public sector jobs and make it a bit more difficult for the police to bully gipsies and to ignore fascist activities. Nevertheless, it can not secure a right to jobs and decent housing for all, or more com-

just protesting against fascist violence. They are also demanding better education, jobs, decent housing, and equality. Libertarian Socialists of *Solidarita* support their struggle. *Solidarita* believes Czech workers and youth have to throw away their prejudices and stand firmly side by side with poor gipsies - not with their leading middle class politicians, who are largely corrupted by the current system of social injustice - in their struggle against discrimination and unemployment. We all need jobs, decent wages and housing, free and accessible education, health care, public transport and a healthy environment. We are all deprived of these by the market system. It gives privileges and power to the rich and discriminates against the poor and abuses minorities even further. More and more social layers find themselves at the social bottom. Gipsies were the first, because they were a black minority, easy to sacrifice. White pensioners, young people and workers follow them. *SOLIDARITA* believes we have to start organising ourselves at our workplaces, in our communities, dole queues and schools to fight the institutions, individuals and the whole system that causes our social deprivation and discrimination.

**UNITY MAKES US
STRONG!**

Solidarita, PO Box 13, Cerna Hora, 679
21, Czech Republic.

bigotry in the UK

THE ARRIVAL of a few hundred Roma asylum seekers in Dover during September and October 1997 resulted in much media and government hysteria. Meridian TV dubbed one group "illegal immigrants"- they all had passports and tickets and asked for asylum as soon as they were able to speak to an immigration officer. "Scroungers" screamed *The Sun*. *The Mail* described the asylum seekers as a "leisure class" allegedly motivated by a Czech TV documentary which had painted a rosy picture of life on benefits in Dover. The so-called quality press were similarly hostile. A *Times* editorial claimed that EU law had made a nonsense of Britain's frontier laws, blaming the Dublin convention. This is bullshit of course. The Dublin convention means that instead of just bouncing asylum seekers from country to country paperwork has to be sorted first. The government signed it because they were getting stuffed by legal actions and a "gentleman's agreement" with France was, surprisingly, not working. Never a paper to let fact get in the way of hysteria, *The Times* claimed that Dublin allowed asylum seekers to claim in the EU country of their choice rather than in the first safe country.

All the EU countries are trying to pass the buck of responsibility for refugees to each other. In Britain the airlines and, possibly the ferry companies, are liable for financial penalties for bringing asylum seekers to this country. This means airline officials do some of the dirty work for the Immigration Service. Recently Stena ferries in Calais have refused to carry Roma people with passports and tickets to Dover on the pretext that they will have to pay for flights to Prague or Bratislava. Those that manage to make it as far as Dover face the threat of imprisonment while their claims are processed. "Heads" of families have been detained. Many have been threatened in detention and "persuaded" to withdraw their claims and leave. Institutional racism reared its ugly head once again as Home Secretary Jack Straw dubbed the Roma people "economic migrants" and "bogus". Gwyn Prosser, Labour MP for Dover and Deal who had privately said that he was sympathetic to the refugees echoed Straw's remarks in a *Dover Express* article. *The Guardian*

pitched in with a comparison of the "generous" benefits system here with that of the Czech republic. Mike O'Brien, Straw's immigration monkey, chose this period to announce a cut in the time limit from 28 to 5 days for legal representations to be made in "abusive" cases. Now this may have been just coincidental but it was clearly an attempt to further smear the Roma and stir up hatred against them. Home Office sources indicated later that the time limit was to be cut in all cases. Presumably because they view all asylum applications as "abusive".

The 1996 Asylum Act's pressure on asylum seekers to apply on arrival and the swift refusal of many cases resulting

dundancies and sackings on the ferries in the '80s and the loss of jobs in the construction industry after the completion of the channel tunnel in the 90s.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, local hostility to the Roma has been at times considerable (though by no means overwhelming). Hostile petitions began to circulate in some shops and schools. Eveline Reynolds, a local toyshop manageress, produced a petition accusing the asylum seekers of "raping the social security system". The petitions have since been withdrawn. Kent Campaign for asylum seekers, Kent Socialist Alliance, Militant and IWW activists got together and produced leaflets to counter the official and media



in loss of benefits while waiting for appeals meant that responsibility for welfare is dumped on local social services. This is a clear divide and rule tactic which resulted in local people being forced into competing with the Roma people and other asylum seekers living in the Dover area, for already scarce resources. Instead of pleading for more resources from central government the leader of Kent County Council branded the asylum seekers "bogus" and, you guessed it, "economic migrants" and met with Czech and Slovak government officials to discuss repatriation. Dover is a town of 30,000 people that has been decimated by the closure of the Kent minefield, re-

hype, setting out the real reasons why the Roma people had left Eastern Europe, and met with a very mixed response. People in Dover became less hostile to the asylum seekers when the National Front announced a few weeks later that it intended to hold a march through the town centre on November 15th. Also the BNP started leafleting. Kent police gave the NF permission to march along the seafront and claimed that only the Home Secretary had the power to ban the march. Jack Straw, having done so much to encourage racism in the first place, said that only the Kent police could ban it.

A counter-demo was called by Kent
continued next page

cleaning up the streets for who?

PROSTITUTES working on the edge of the city in East London have recently been subject to a concerted campaign of abuse from the police, the local press and vigilantes. Some of the women are as young as thirteen, many are care leavers and work to support drug habits. Police harassment of prostitutes is nothing new, and the women believe that the latest round of arrests were made in revenge for the arrests of local officers found using the services of local working girls.

However the activity of vigilantes in the area has become a very real danger to the women. Many have been hounded out of the more middle class traditional red light districts in North London and taken to working in the no-man's land where the city meets the slums of the East End. The area has a large Bangladeshi population and is home to the two main mosques that serve the local community. Community 'leaders' have been petitioning the police, councillors and the press in an attempt to 'clean up the area'. It is no coincidence that this is

happening at the same time as the local council are trying to sell the area to business and tourists as a Bengali equivalent of Chinatown - Banglatown - a project that has met with a less than enthusiastic welcome from the local Asian community who do not relish the prospect of becoming a shallow tourist attraction.

The city is encroaching on the area at an alarming rate - Hoxton has been yuppified beyond recognition by artists and designers and Spitalfields market is about to be sold to developers and turned into a Futures market.

The area is extremely impoverished and has been home to gangs of youths for a long time. It seems that the campaign against the working girls has provided an outlet for violence that could just have easily been directed against any other group single out as scapegoats. Women are being chased by gangs with baseball bats, beaten up, having bottles thrown at them and being hounded out of their homes while the local press is awash with articles about 'tarts touting their torrid trade.'

In contrast the city gents, police officers and councillors who use their services are being left alone. So are the pimps - who similarly are not averse to beating the women who feed them when they've failed to bring in enough money.

A local group is working with the women to try and combat some of the dangers they face. The group provide condoms, hot drinks and food one evening a week and a legal advice service. The work is not funded and is run by volunteers. The group seems to make a difference in that women can, at least, access help with housing, benefits, healthcare and legal representation. But legal representation is next to useless when women are too scared or cynical to report attacks and when the police are at best indifferent. However the work often goes beyond this; bundling women into cars to get them away from vigilantes, violent pimps or cops, providing shelter when women cannot go home for the night or even getting women out of London for their safety. Volunteers have been followed home, had their homes burgled and graffitied and been subject to attacks themselves. They have also attended local meetings to try and put forward the prostitutes' case.

Since the group's involvement the women have started talking about setting up a local union. There are also plans to set up a safe house - something that is desperately needed. Such a project, necessarily, would have to be independent of and secret from any state body such as social services - many of the women have fled social services 'care' and are hardly likely to want to return to it.

It seems that women working as prostitutes on the streets will continue to be subject to high levels of violence as long as pimps control their business and 'soliciting' remains illegal. Where more powerful interests such as big business and yuppification are involved, the risks are even higher as women become scapegoats in local "clean up campaigns". The ultimate question has to be - cleaning up the streets for who?

continued from previous page

Socialist Alliance and Kent Campaign for Asylum Seekers supported by AFA, SolFed, IWW, Slap magazine, NAAR, Kurdish groups, Unison, YRE, Militant and others. (when we say supported we mean turned out for a counter demonstration, not necessarily the same one. We don't think there was much tactical or political unity before or on the day. Not necessarily a bad thing either.) Around 250 people attended a rally in the centre while another 150 or so physically and verbally confronted the 40 or so NF supporters and blocked their way along the seafront. The police soon came to their rescue. A couple of people were injured, one bitten by a police dog. Twenty minutes later the NF left en masse in the coach they'd arrived in. Only 4 or 5 locals had turned out to support the NF did not march with them. The headline of the *Dover Express* the following week read "Never Again. Fas-

cists flee Dover with the message, Don't Come Back".

At the time of writing, mid-December 1997, there seems to be less hostility to the asylum seekers in Dover. Many people who signed the petitions in September and October have since said they now regret it and didn't fully understand the issues at the time. There have been no signs of fascist activity but there is certainly no room for complacency. Needless to say the *Fortress Britain* policies of the government continue. New arrivals of Roma continue more slowly. Some sympathetic items in the media, the *Mirror* and *The Big Issue* and *World In Action* highlighted the levels of racism in the Czech and Slovak Republics and their government's unwillingness to deal with racism or the social exclusion which the Roma continue to suffer. Anti-racists continue to leaflet in Dover and have strengthened their links with the Roma community.

australia

reflections on australian democracy

MY DICTIONARY defines democracy as rule of the many, from the Greek *demokratia* meaning government by the people. It is widely accepted that certain countries are democratic (western Europe, USA etc.) and others aren't (China, Cuba, Nigeria, for example). There are many areas where democracy is applied to; industrial democracy, for example, is a watered down version of workers control whereby workers have some say in how industry is run, rather than it being totally at the whim of management.

One facet of democracy is the right to abstain or not to participate. While anarchists do not put much store in "rights", this one should be particularly dear to anarchists, as it represents a chance not to choose between equally bad options. The right to abstain is also linked to how those whose views form a minority are treated by the majority. The fledgling Czech democracy, for example, has certainly failed this test when it comes to the Roma refugees.

It is important how a minority is dealt with, and how they perceive their treatment. Anarchists address these problems by making decisions at the smallest possible level, by having federalist structures for decision making where things are transparent and mandated, and by recognising the right to "secede". To secede means to opt out of the federal structure and form whatever new relationship to that structure that the minority wishes to. The right to secede or dissent is what distinguishes anarchist federalism from the phoney versions peddled by the European Union, the US and Australia, among others. But, having recently been there, I'd like to look at Australia's democracy in greater detail.

Australia is one of a handful of countries in the world where voting is compulsory. Failure to vote can result in a \$200 fine (about £90). To make matters worse, there are three tiers of government - federal, state and local, each with their won bureaucracy, all for a population of 18 million.

The absurdity of it all was well illus-

trated on a three day tour from Adelaide to Melbourne I took. The tour happened to start on the South Australian election day. Our driver, a good solid bloke with that traditional Aussie anti-authoritarian streak, was too busy in the morning to vote. He had already expressed his contempt for politicians - something I heard again and again in Australia. We spent a while searching several small towns for a polling station (fortunately you didn't have to vote where you live) until we found one, just before it closed. Our driver avoided his fine, and when asked how he voted, replied, "there was only one choice really, I voted No Pokies". No Pokies was a single issue ticket dedicated to getting gambling machines out of the State's pubs.

While it's undoubtedly useful for such campaigns to get a boost, the most famous being "No Dams" in the 80s, it's a farce of a democracy, constructed for politicians' vanity, where they can claim to have been elected on turnouts as good as those achieved by Stalin, Mao, Bokassa and other good democrats, though not by such wide margins.

The one argument I heard in favour of compulsory voting there was that otherwise single issue and pressure groups would get too powerful. If this is the strength of Australian democracy it is not worthy of the name. My experiences in

Australia were of very good people under governments of such incompetence, banality and stupidity that multinationals must rub their hands in glee. It's not a case of the governments people deserve, as no one deserves government such as this.

@ Tourist

sweden

kristal natt and anti-schengen demo in stockholm

250 ANARCHISTS and left activists demonstrated in central Stockholm on 9 November 1997 in memory of the happenings of the same day 1938 when German nazis attacked Jewish property. The demonstration was also to protest against the proposed Swedish ratification of the Schengen Treaty which will be a blow against both immigrants and refugees as well as radical social groups.

Visible police presence was minimal and no fascists (other than those in blue uniforms) were observed in the area. The demonstration ended in front of the immigration ministry where various speeches were held. As an eerie reminder of what the day stood for, Swedish fascists had crushed the windows of the homosexual association, RFSL, sometime in the night.

@nacho-quiz questions

1. Luisa Capetilla was an anarchist and organiser for the *Federacion Libre de los Trabajadores*, the first Puerto Rican union at the turn of the century. According to the history of the movement there, she was the first woman in Puerto Rico to do what?

2. In 1995, a Melbourne anarchist was prosecuted after displaying a poster saying "Kennet must Die!" (Kennet was the reactionary state Prime Minister of Victoria) What were the grounds for his successful appeal?

3. In 1909, British syndicalist Tom Mann went to speak in the mining town of Broken Hill, in New South Wales, Australia, during a bitter strike there. The NSW Police banned him from speaking. How did the miners get round this?

4. To which founder of the Labour Party are attributed the words, "If I ever felt inclined to be timid as I was going into a room full of people, I would say to myself, 'You're the cleverest member of one of the cleverest families in the cleverest class of the cleverest nation in the world, why should you be frightened?'"

(answers on page 34)

germany

solidarity with german anti-fascist

ON 2ND NOVEMBER 1997 a 22 year-old anarchist and antifascist Hans-Georg Eberl (member of FAU/IAA and I-AFD/IFA) was arrested during an antifascist action against a congress of the extreme right. He was held in "investigative custody" for 2 weeks and is accused of "dangerous bodily harm" and "serious breach of peace". The FAU & I-AFD are calling on the international movement for solidarity with Hans-Georg and to write protests to the responsible Bavarian Minister of the Interior, Beckstein and to the public prosecutor in Ingolstadt.

Various parties and organisations of the extreme right had mobilised for a meeting in the Bavarian town of Koesching (near Ingolstadt) on the 2nd November 1997 to "create a cross-border European right". Around 500 neonazis and members of the far right attended the event. Yvan Blot, Euro-MP for the French "Front National" spoke, as did members of the Flemish "Vlaams Blok", the "Deutsche Liga fuer Volk und Heimat" (DLVH), and Alfred Mechttersheimer (former member of the German Green Party, founding member of the right-extremist "Friedenskomitee 2000" and of the "Deutschland-Bewegung") as well as the former party leader of the "Republikaner" Franz Schoenhuber.

Around 140 antifascists protested outside the meeting place of the neonazis. This antifascist gathering was continuously provoked by neonazis and nazis, until eventually two antifascists were attacked by a nazi-skin and one of them had her nose broken. The police deliberately allowed the nazi to escape.

As a result, a fight broke out between antifascists and neonazis, during which the police intervened on the side of the nazis and started attacking the antifascists. Three antifascists were taken into custody, one of whom is Hans-Georg who is accused of having thrown a stone which hit the big toe of a policeman. The latter was hit so hard that he didn't even need medical attention.

The Hans-Georg was held in "investi-

gative custody" in Eichstaett from the 2nd to the 14th of November 1997. He was made to do forced labour for 1DM per hour and no-one - except for his parents - was allowed to visit him. Letters were censored and most were only given to him after his release from prison. Hans-Georg was subjected to special harassment, for example he was only given his glasses after a week of imprisonment. At the same time the authorities tried to carry out a "fast proceeding" under a new law. In a "fast proceeding" circumstantial evidence is enough for a sentence. The public prosecutor responsible is the nephew of the Bavarian minister for the interior, Guenter Beckstein.

Repression against antifascists and anarchists has always been one of the instruments of the state. During the last few months, the State has banned antifascist actions and demonstrations and persecuted militants. The democratic state is confirming itself once more as a henchman for the right.

Please write letters of protest to:

(The Public Prosecutor) Amtsgericht Ingolstadt z.H. Staatsanwalt Beckstein Auf der Schanz 37, 85049 Ingolstadt Germany Tel.: +841-3120

(The Federal Minister Responsible for Bavaria) Staatsminister fuer Bundesangelegenheiten und Bevollmaechtigter des Freistaates Bayern beim Bund Schlegelstr. 1, 53113 Bonn Germany Tel.: +228/202-0 or 202-1 Fax: +228/22 9800

(The Bavarian minister of the interior, Beckstein) Staatsminister des Innern Odeonsplatz 3 80539 Muenchen Germany Tel.: +89/2192-01 Fax: +89/2192-3350

Please transfer any donations to:

Account-Owner: K. Jagau, Account-Number: 3594 11-708, Bank Code Number: 600 100 70, Bank: Postgiro Stuttgart, Germany, Note: Ebs

More information via: FAU or I-AFD, Gruppe Verden, Grosse Str. 62, 27283 Verden, Germany.

E-Mail: faustgt4@anarch.free.de or i-afd_1@anarch.free.de

france

the not unusual case of Olivier Martin

AFTER A DEMO against the Front National in Toulouse in February, Olivier Martin, a 35 year old anarchist militant saw a young Arab guy being beaten up by two thugs. Naturally enough, he intervened. It turned out that the thugs were plain clothes police, and he was convicted of assaulting the police and sentenced to 9 months' imprisonment, plus 9 months' from a previous suspended sentence.

On appeal this was changed to a 50,000 francs fine and 12 months suspended sentence. Letters of support and donations should be sent to:

Comité de Soutien à Olivier Martin
c/o CNT-AIT Toulouse
7 Rue de Remesy
31000 TOULOUSE
FRANCE

The support committee note that his case is not unusual. Police, whether plain clothes or off duty, regularly assault people, usually of Arab origin, and often around anti-fascist demonstrations. As well as Olivier Martin's case, there is also that of Richard Martin in Marseille, who intervened against two men who he thought looked like members of the FN attacking an Arab. He was charged with assaulting a police officer. When the case came to court, photos proved that the two cops were not wearing any identification, illegal under French law, and the police's case lost credibility. Unfortunately, Olivier Martin's actions were outside the range of the cameras.

news from greece & turkey

ON NOVEMBER 7, 1997, Basil Karaplis (of the Athens ABC) flew to Izmir, Turkey, invited by the local group of Savas Karsitlari (War Resisters) and the Evrensel Kultur Merkezi (Universal Culture Centre), which had organized a three day meeting to celebrate International Antifascist Day (Anniversary of Kristal Nacht, Germany, Nov.9 1938). Savas Karsitlari is one of the components of the AMARGI Anarchist monthly which was produced in Izmir for some years but stopped in 1994 due mainly to economic reasons. This was the first visit to Turkey not connected to military objectors and non violence, since its purpose was to present the antifascist movement in Greece to the Turkish public. The event started with an exhibition of photos from Greek resistance to the Metaxas dictatorship (1936), against the German occupation (1941-1944), during the Greek civil war and the British occupation of the country (1944-1949), against the transfer of Greece from the British to American influence, against the military junta (1967-1974) and up to the present day. The film "Z", by Kosta Gavras, was shown the same evening, telling the story of Grigoris Lambrakis (an MP of the "Unified Democratic Left" who was active in the Peace Movement and in the international campaign against the Vietnam War and who finally was murdered by fascists due to these activities in May 1963). "The Greek Civil War" (by Roviros Manthoulis) was shown, followed by a detailed discussion on the Greek anti-fascist movement covering all periods of Greek history (from the formation of the Greek state to the end of the civil war) and all of its aspects, Greek-Turkish relations included. On the last day "Days of the Polytechnic School" (the story of the anti-junta revolt on Nov.17 1973, directed by Dimitris Makris) was shown. That discussion lasted till late focusing on Greece and also on what happened in Turkey, and of course on what had happened and is still going on in Cyprus. The conclusion of the three days films, speeches and discussions is that Greek and Turkish people (and peoples and ethnic minorities) have nothing to separate. What they share is a common enemy and that is capitalism and government policies. What the anti-fascists should fight for - in both and in all coun-

tries - is the freedom of people and NOT the freedom of things, property or even land (be it a "motherland" or not). The general idea was that we can all be alive and happy, once we get rid of state and "super"-state oppression which give birth to fascism and nationalism when these are needed to promote capitalist interests. Next day, three newspapers attended a press conference. After a night of raki drinking, singing and talking, B. Karaplis returned to Athens after it had been decided to strengthen the contacts between the antifascist movements (and between Anarchists) in Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Kurdistan and all over the world.

Also discussed during the visit was the situation of Osman Murat Ulke, a mili-

tary objector who is in the Eski Sehir military jail. He's been sentenced to 2 years prison, after which he's to face another trial (in case he still refuses to serve in the army) which will cost him another 2 years imprisonment and so on until he manages to escape or until Turkish laws change under domestic and international pressure. The ties between the Turkish and Greek antimilitarist movements have been very tight. Anarchist antimilitarists from Turkey went to defend Greek Anarchist military objectors (Nikos Maziotis and Pavlos Nathanail) at the Greek court-martials while Anarchist comrades from Greece defended Osman Murat Ulke, "Osi", at his trial at the national security court of Ankara early in 1997.

anarchists kidnapped in Chechnya

A FEW DAYS before christmas, five Poles were kidnapped from a convoy of humanitarian aid in Chechnya. Among them were Marek Kurzyniec - a veteran FA (Polish Anarchist Federation) activist, and Krzysztof Galinski - one of the founders of the anarchist magazine Mac Pariadka ("Mother of Order"). Of the others, Pawel Chojnacki and Pavel Thiel were part of Freedom and Peace (WiP) an anti-authoritarian collective. The fifth is Dominik Piaskowski.

It is believed that the men won't be harmed by the Chechens (if it Chechens who have done this) because they are well known for their humanitarian aid during the war. Three convoys organized with the help of the FA were the only ones to reach the areas of fighting. All the UN-organised convoys were stopped by the Russians and their cargo sold on the black market. The FA also organized demonstrations at Russian consulates in Poland, and gathered signatures for a petition to protest the imperialist policies of the Russian government.

As we went to press, no one had claimed responsibility, though Russian state involvement is possible. The FA and other Polish activists are putting a lot of pressure on their government to do what they can to free the hostages. It has already been revealed that the Chechen government have not even followed up basic leads on the case, visiting Polish journalists were able to find out more.

finland independence day

ON DECEMBER 6th the syndicalist organization 'Solidarisuus' (Solidarity) organized a demonstration for social justice, the six hour day, and decent pay, outside the president's palace. About 400 people came from all over Finland.

December 6th is the Finnish independence day, so the demo's main function was to show our anger at the rich visitors to the president's palace.

There were a few confrontations with the riot police, but mostly it went calmly with only six arrests. Press coverage was quite objective, mentioning that a few bottles and hundreds of snowballs were thrown at the riot cops. There were all kinds of people on the demo, not only anarchists and syndicalists. I noticed that the middle aged unemployed and some old ladies were the angriest people there!

Later that evening there was supposed to be an anti-fascist demonstration but the cops stopped the anti-fascists from going to the bar where neonazis held their gig.

anarchy in chile

THE AIM OF "Freedom"... throughout our years of struggle, has been carried deep in the hearts of thousands of people battling for their basic rights. These voices, screaming for justice, have not been silenced by the violence and lies of our exploiters and Madre Tierra editions has published a book about anarchism in Chile which rescues our history. The book, by Héctor Pavelic, is called "*Caliche: el rostro pampino*" (Caliche: (saltpetre) the Face of the Pampas). The book deals not only with Anarchism, but the larger workers' movement in Chilean history (from 16th Century until 1994). It pays particular attention to the role of libertarians. I will now summarise the role of the anarchists in this history.

nitrate miners

We begin in 1872, when the Chilean Section of the First International was established in Valparaíso, a major port. Tragically, this was also the year the anarchists were expelled from the International, and the section did not last for long. It did, however, plant the seeds for the growth of the workers movement, spreading libertarian ideas throughout the unions and work-places, particularly among the nitrate miners in the north of the country.

This process was interrupted by the Pacific war in 1879. Chile had occupied Antofagasta (then Bolivian territory, and rich in nitrate deposits) and declared war on both Bolivia and Peru. British Capital also had a major stake in the conflict, having bought up large tracts of mining land cheap during the war. The eventual victory of the Chilean State brought prosperity to the British capitalists, Chilean bosses, and the State (via nitrate taxes) but spelt misery and death to the people. As ever, it was the exploited who paid the price and the rich who enjoyed the spoils of war. Unfortunately for them, the war wasn't enough to stop the social struggle or to tame the people.

In 1887 the *Unión Republicana del Pueblo* (People's Republican Union) was formed, with a clear anarchist platform.

Shortly afterwards, there was a series of large scale strikes by railworkers, miners and others, culminating finally in the first national general strike in 1890. The strike was the first of its sort in Latin America and was brutally put down.

In 1891, President Balmaceda, who was rapidly losing control of Congress, attempted to press through reforms against the wishes of both Congress, and - more significantly - the interests of British capital in Chile. This led to a civil war of quite unexpected dimensions that finally deposed Balmaceda.

History, or rather, official history, tries to hide the real genesis of the conflict, citing violations to the constitution, but we are not stupid and aren't deceived by these intellectuals who fill whole textbooks with crap. Constitution is not a strong argument: after all constitutions are brandished and used by all governments for their own purposes.

Between 1892-1897 many societies were established including *Sociedad de la Igualdad*, formed by Francisco Bilbao, Santiago Arcos, Victorino Lastarrias and Eusebio Lillo - which fought for what they called the 'Sovereignty of Reason', 'Universal Fraternity with common and natural life' and 'People's Sovereignty in Politics'. The group consisted of artists, workers and intellectuals and published the paper *El Amigo del Pueblo*. From 1850 until 1859, the group were a constant headache to the state and all those who had been involved from the beginning were exiled on its dissolution. The society had shared some of Proudhon's ideas around federalism but didn't call themselves anarchists. This was the first experience of this kind and was a model for those to come.

Among the other societies forming during this period were *Sociedad de Protección al Trabajador y mutuo apoyo* (Society for worker's protection and mutual aid) and *Centro Social de Trabajadores - El Grito del Pueblo* (Workers Social Centre - The People's Scream). Newspapers and magazines appeared, including *El Oprimido* (The Oppressed) and *El Proletario* and many important faces in Chilean Anarchism came to light: Magno Espimónza, Escobar Cavallo, Luis

Olea....

general strike

In 1898 there was a general strike in Iquique, accompanied by the creation of new societies (*Rebelion* - a carpenters' society, *Caupolicán* - a mapuche Indian name, FFCCE - railworkers resistance, etc...) new magazines (*La Tromba* - The waterspout - *El Rebelde* - The Rebel, *La Antorcha* - The Torch - *El Pueblo* - and *El Jornal*) and the first May Day demonstration. This was a time of strong social movement and the *Partido Obrero Francisco Bilbao* (Francisco Bilbao Workers Party) became an anarchist group in 1899. The following year saw the first demonstration against military service and the army - under the slogan: "The Army is the Academy of Crime!", organised exclusively by anarchists.

Between 1900 and 1906 a lot of anarcho-sindicalist and resistance organisations emerged, most of them clandestine. In 1902 dockers staged a 60 day strike and in 1903 there was a general strike in Valparaíso resulting in the murder of more than 100 workers by the oppressor dogs. The rebellion spread to Antofagasta, Lota and Coronel and lasted for 43 days.

The famous *Semana Roja* (Red Week) in 1905 was a crucial event in our early history. Workers had had enough of the inhuman conditions in which they were forced to live, the rising cost of living and the taxes on meat from Argentina. A worker's committee *Centro de Estudios Sociedad Ateneo Obrero* called all workers to join the strike and to support the cause. On October 22nd, 30,000 people joined the uprising, including butchers, shoe makers, tanners, cigar makers, truckmen, tapestry makers, typographers, telegraphers, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, bakers and the brave FFCCE workers who blew up the railways. The 1800 strong police force were no match for the crowds and the ruling class were forced to form a 'White Guard' of 300 armed rich boys to pitch in. Despite 250 victims, the movement continued to grow steadily.

In 1906, two important federations were formed: *Federación de*

Trabajadores de Chile (FTCH) and *Federación de Estudiantes de Chile* (FECH) the latter comprising one of the most important forces in Chilean Social Struggle.

tragedy of Iquique

1907 saw one of the most tragic episodes in our history (and possibly the worst mass slaughter in a labour dispute in history). In the North of Chile, in the isolated desert, the nitrate miners went on strike for basic living conditions. The mining camps or villages were built by the bosses solely for the purpose of production - they built substandard housing, stocked the stores, paid the workers in tokens redeemable only in the company stores and held strict control over the day to day life on the camps.

The strikers descended on the town of Iquique with their wives and kids to make their demands and were joined by other workers in the city; solidarity flourished everywhere. A strike committee headed by José Pariggs was formed - Luis Olea was an important member of the committee - both were prominent anarchist militants. The strike headquarters was established at the Santa Maria School. Overall there were around 4,500 strikers and supporters in the school and another 1,500 or so camping in tents around the square.

The army were called in by the bosses, martial law was declared, stores were locked and on December 21st at 3.45 pm the slaughter began. The first to be shot were the members of the committee. Chilean, Argentinean, Peruvian, Bolivian and European workers were slain with an astonishing ruthlessness, with their wives and children. The number of victims was reckoned to be up to 3600. Luis Olea was murdered by Roberto Silva Renard - the Butcher of Iquique.

An eye witness gave the following account of the massacre "On the central balcony...stood 30 or so men in the prime of life, quite calm, beneath a great Chilean flag, and surrounded by the flags of other nations. They were the strike committee...All eyes were fixed on them just as all the guns were directed at them. Standing, they received the shots, As though struck by lightning they fell, and the great flag fluttered down over their bodies...There was a moment of silence as the machine guns were lowered to aim at the school yard and the hall, occupied by a compact mass of people who

spilled over into the main square. There was a sound like thunder as they fired. The gunfire ceased and the foot soldiers went into the school by the side doors, firing as men and women fled in all directions."

The large numbers working in the mines, their diverse places of origin, and the bitter conditions forged one of the strongest forces in the Chilean workers struggle (unfortunately, condemned to disappear after the 1st World War) and their revolutionary spirit spread like wildfire.

This movement directly led, in 1909 to the formation of the *Federación Obrera de Chile* - FOCH, which aimed to pull together all the organisations involved in the struggle into a national federation. There were anarchists, Marxists, democrats, etc... The various working class movements rapidly began to organise themselves within the new federation and in 1910 the FECH formed the popular university Victorino Lastarrias (in honour of one of the founders of *Sociedad de la Igualdad* 1850). The university forged vital links between workers and students and offered basic education to the exploited.

During this period, the strikes, building of barricades and rioting against the police continued. In 1912 *Federación Obrera Regional de Chile* - FORCH was formed with the remarkable participation of Juan Onofre Chamorro. This was also the time that Manuel Rojas was writing about the situation of the working class in books such as *Hijo de Ladrón* (Son of a Thief), *Lo obscura vida radiante* (The dark bright life).

the IWW

In 1917 the IWW arrived in the region and the following year the FECH organised the *Asemblea Obrera de Alimentación* - Assembly for the Nourishment of the Workers. The FOCH, IWW and POS (*Partido Obrero Socialista* - Socialist Workers Party) all participated. In September 1919, the AOA called a general strike, which was brutally put down by the authorities. President San Fuentes instigated legal proceedings against the strikers and many workers and students were tried.

As the nitrate mines began to produce less profits and workers were laid off, miners, highly politicised and practiced in revolutionary organisation were returning to their villages. Strikes were break-

ing out throughout the country, the state was in substantial debt to foreign banks and to deflect attention from its domestic problems, the government invented a war with Peru. The war never happened, but troops were deployed to strategic points and nationalist and rabid anti - Peruvian propaganda was disseminated by the state.

The FECH was opposed to any armed conflict, and openly condemned the government for its belligerency. On September 21st a column of rich scum broke into the FECH's headquarters burning books, furniture, and ultimately the whole building. "We have to teach a lesson to these so-called Chileans, who have sold out to Peru's gold" said one of the authorities. Most of the "Traitors to the country" were jailed after what the government called the "Subversion Trial". One of those jailed - the student Domingo Gómez Rojas went mad from torture and was sent to a sanatorium, where he died aged 23. Overall 1920 was a year of brutal repression for the workers movement - many locals were burnt down, many militants were murdered, many workers were sent to prison and the almost forgotten San Gregorio Massacre where hundreds of miners were killed mercilessly was the following year.

By 1925 there were 214 unions in Chile boasting the active participation of more than 200,000 people. And it was the first time a Chilean delegation of the IWW were able to participate in an IWA Congress. Henceforth our participation became more regular. But on June 5th 1925 more blood was shed in La Coruña (nitrate mine encampment) - on this occasion more than 500 rebels were tortured in Iquique.

In 1930 the Chilean economy was hit by disaster: German scientists discovered a synthetic nitrate, far cheaper than the natural one, and the mines which had provided a meagre living for thousands of workers and where revolutionary syndicalism had been bred, began to close rapidly. The workers were forced, by famine, to move south, where the overcrowded cities were almost collapsing. As no pain comes alone (Chilean expression) the year before - 1929 - had been the year of the Wall Street Crash and the beginning of a worldwide recession. The situation was therefore even more desperate.

At this time in the 30s an important figure in anarchism emerged: Pedro Nolasco Arratia. Today, a French collective uses his name.

On April 27th 1934, the FOCH headquarters in Santiago was assaulted by the police and the white guards; 7 workers died in the attack, a child was slain, and 200 were badly injured. In June the same year, 477 peasants were slain in Alto Bio-Bio, Ranquil and Lonquimay. In December 1936 the Confederación General de Trabajadores - CGT was formed with the participation of the IWW and the FORCH.

Some important achievements of the IWW were: i) the 8 hour working day, ii) Sunday rest, iii) Indemnity for accidents at work, iv) Monetary recognition of years of service, v) the right to retirement and vi) the right to an old age pension. By this time the FACH - Chilean Anarchist Federation - was active and sent volunteers to the Spanish Civil War.

going underground

On January 28th 1946 at Bulmes Square (Santiago) the police murdered 8 workers and seriously injured many more. In 1947, Pisagua (an infamous concentration camp) was opened and a period of fullscale persecution of anarchists began. Anarchist organisations had to go underground. One such clandestine initiative was the Luisa Michel cultural centre, whose clear aim was to give a rational education to female workers. In 1953 its name changed to Luisa Michel Libertarian School. It was run by comrade Flora Sanhueza R. and had over 70 students. With time, it began to accept children as well. It worked non stop until 1957, and we praise the strength of libertarian women who were able to resist the authorities for a period of ten years!

In 1950 Ernesto Miranda incorporated 12 federations and several syndicates into the Movimiento Unitario Nacional de Trabajadores -MUNT. Its aim was to unite all the independent unions. This was achieved in 1953 when the Central Unitaria de Trabajadores - CUT was formed. Its initial statement of aims and principles was drawn up by 3 anarchists from the CGT. However in 1957 a split shook the organisation: the anarcho-syndicalists abandoned the CUT in protest at its involvement in an electoral pact with the FRAP (*Frente Amplio Popular*) during the lead up to the presidential election in 1958. FRAP was a political institution of left wing parties and CUT's involvement (with the FRAP) in the electoral process was

seen as a betrayal of working class independence.

Miranda, after being called illustrious son by Fidel Castro himself, created the *Comité de Defensa de la Revolución Cubana*. While on the other hand, the Anarchist Federation, FACH, declared in 1960 that "At this pace, Cuban Revolution will end married with the Russians". On August 15th 1965, in the Liberation Hall, the MIR (*Movimiento de Izquierda Revolucionaria* - Revolutionary Left Wing Movement) was born. The first secretary was the Trotskyite Enrique Sepulveda but two dedicated anarcho-syndicalists Miranda and Clotario Blest were on the Committee. Originally the MIR was an attempt to create a strong anarcho-syndicalist movement, but in 1967 Miguel Enríquez and Luciano Cruz took over, polluting the MIR with Marxist Leninist ideas/practices. Miranda, Blest and their anarchist comrades quit.

The next year, the VOP was formed (*Vanguardia Organizada del Pueblo*) by a group of young men who rejected the authoritarianism of the MIR. There were two tendencies within it: Pannekoekism (council communism) and Anarchism. Both the MIR and the VOP had their influence and during 1969 they intervened within many work-place struggles forcing the bosses to sign agreements drawn up by the working class (and financing their activities from the rich through bank robberies).

However, the authorities continued to take their revenge whenever they could - for example, during this period the Homeless Peoples' Committee of Puerto Montt occupied some fields in the south to build themselves housing. This led to an order to attack by minister Pérez Zujovic and the resulting Irigoyen Pampas massacre claimed the lives of 9 people including two pregnant women.

In 1970 the new (relatively popular) Socialist President, Salvador Allende declared an amnesty for all political prisoners. VOP benefited from this and agreed, on the president's request, to form part of the GAP (*Grupo de Amigos Personales*), the president's personal guard. In March 1971, VOP members of the guard warned the president about a rightwing plot to topple the government. The most important of the plotters was the traitor Edmundo Pérez Zujovic. Allende refused to heed these warnings, but the VOP used direct action to prevent Zujovic from suc-

ceeding in his plans - on June 8th, 1971, Pérez Zujovic was executed. The VOP had also found him guilty of the Puerto Montt massacre.

However the VOP paid a very high price for its promise to protect Allende as he began to lose control of the government and the country. Not only were its members pursued by the state, but also by the right and left wing. The Rivera Calderón brothers were cowardly murdered by the secret police, unarmed and holding a white flag, in apparent revenge for their participation in the execution of the bastard, Zujovic.

workers take over

In 1972, partly as a reaction to severe food and other shortages, (the US had imposed a trade and credits embargo in retaliation for the nationalisation of the US owned copper mines) the workers began to take over their workplaces. Neighbourhood committees distributed goods direct from the worker controlled factories and the anarchist aim of self organization was achieved in many areas of life.

The FTR (*Frente de Trabajadores Revolucionarios*) played a major role in this process - demonstrating that workers were quite capable of running a factory by themselves, that government and bosses were no longer necessary and the government were taken completely by surprise. Allende balked at the prospect of workers self organisation and sent 'observers' to the affected factories, who in practice did the same obnoxious job of any traditional boss: gave orders. At the same time the peasants were taking over the land and organising through the MCR (*Movimiento de Campesinos Revolucionarios*).

The pressure against the popular government was mounting, boosted by millions of dollars pumped into the rightwing opposition from the US (Kissinger had stated that he did not see why the US should stand idly by 'and let a country go communist due to the irresponsibility of its own people') and on June 29th 1973 there was an attempted Coup d'état. This was a test to see how the people would react to a real one. The army began to attempt to search and inspect the industrial cordons (to seize activists) but people erected barricades and prevented the police or the army getting into the factories or their homes.

the reaction

The real coup came when the tanks rolled into the streets of Santiago on September 11th 1973. This is remembered as the most terrible day this century, as a nightmare where thousands and thousands of people were tortured, raped and murdered. The people were defenceless against the new dictator Pinochet (or Pinoshit, call him what you will) having only a few or no weapons - those that escaped death were sent as political prisoners to concentration camps in the north. Pinochet was to rule for nearly 17 years.

These first camps, in a dreadful and cruel irony, were established upon the remains of the old nitrate mine villages - the original cradles of class consciousness.

Many others, however, were sprouting like mushrooms after rain in the rest of the country.

Those who were executed were thrown into the sea or buried illegally in Chinolco or unmarked graves. In Santiago the incarcerated revolutionaries (called by the army prisoners of war) were sent to the Stadiums, to the concentration camps and to secret jails. By 1974, these prisoners who had been killed at the hands of Pinoshit's dogs were called "the disappeared", for the government publically denied all knowledge of these people. All political parties and trade unions were banned, some University courses were closed down - denounced as focuses for revolutionaries. People were cowed by fear under the terrible shadow of the DINA (*Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional*) - the secret police.

In 1978, the Victoria nitrate mine was closed due to its reputation of being a cradle of political extremity.

However by the onset of the 80s people had regrouped and were beginning to fight back. In 1980 the NSF (Norwegian IWA section) obtained the freedom of the VOP members who had now been in prison for 9 years and 4 months (they had been arrested 2 years before the coup and had been transferred to concentration camps by Pinochet). They exchanged prison for exile.

MIR (a marxist movement as explained before) assassinated Roger Vergara - the chief of Army Intelligence. And in 1982 textile workers went on strike after many years of fear; the Government couldn't intimidate them any longer. They decided to risk police brutality for the sake of the whole workers' movement. The

strike kept on going until its bitter end. On May 11th 1983 a solidarity strike was called: at 2pm workers would go straight to home, children wouldn't go to school, teachers wouldn't give any lessons, people wouldn't buy anything and vehicles would drive slowly through the streets. At nightfall, lights would be switched off and people would march hitting empty pots. Everything happened as planned, although there were some incidents at the universities. At 8pm the sound of empty pots began. The police tried to silence it by throwing tear gas bombs. Two were killed in La Victoria (a working class neighbourhood) and Lo Plaza, and 600 were arrested with several wounded. Between 1983 and 1984 mass protests became more frequent and the people defended themselves with molotovs, stones and barricades.

Anarchists were, of course, involved in these uprisings but they did not especially try to spread their ideas; the struggle against the dictator and the fight for human rights took precedence over ideological differences. All the revolutionary movements were in the fight together - there would be more appropriate times for ideological arguments in the future.

In 1984, in Talca, a libertarian magazine called *La voz del Naturismo* was distributed and in 1987 black flags reappeared in Santiago, Concepción and Osorno. Social centres began to appear - a centre for social studies *El Duende* (The Elf) in Santiago, and the *Kolective Anarkista Liberacion* - KAL in Concepcion both under the umbrella of TASYs *Taller de Análisis Sindical y social* (Studio for Social Studies and Analysis), created with the aim of providing space to the oppressed. A paper called *Acrata* was published by Colectivo Anarquista Concepción and the bulletin *Liberación* by the KAL. *Acción Directa* was published by anarchist comrades in Santiago. In 1989, Pinochet was finally forced to admit defeat and 'democracy' was restored to Chile.

In 1990 *El Duende* hosted the creation of *Coordinadora Anarquista Estudiantil*, and in Concepción *Solidaridad Obrera* supported strikes. On January 2nd 1991, in an assembly in Concepción, the Anarchist Intercities Federation *Federacion Anarquista Interciudadana* was established. Then, again, in Concepcion, the JAM (*Juventudes Anti Militaristas*) and, in Santiago, COSMO (*Colectivo Contra el*

Sevicio Militar Obligatorio) were formed. After this appeared other movements such as MALO (*Movimiento Anarquista Luis Olea*), COSMO Temuco, FAI Concepción, Kolectivo Kultural Libertario Malatesta in Concepcion, *Red Anarquista* (Anarchist Web) in Villa Alemana, Osorno, Temuco, Concepción, Valparaiso, Santiago.

anarchism today

As regards our collective, the last year was a time for re-organisation. Some people left, others joined us as we finally decided to dissolve the KAL. September, and October were very difficult months for us - full of suspiciousness and divisions. Recently we've been searching for a proper name to the collective, and we ended up with *Árbol Negro* (Black Tree) which we think is about right.

In relation to anarcho-syndicalism, we sent a delegation of two people representing Concepción and Santiago respectively to the IWA congress in Spain in December 1997, where we were recognised as a section of the IWA in Chile and we took over the work left by the IWW. Nowadays we're in a period of shaping *Solidaridad Obrera* and in that sense we'll celebrate a Congress of the three cities affiliated to the International (Temuco, Santiago, Concepción) in March next year. Soon we will certainly be a strong force again, untamed by the years of terror. We have to take back what was stolen by the army. We hope to begin to release *Solidaridad Obrera* monthly - if possible - a bulletin designed to create awareness among our class.

Well, this is the history of anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism in Chile. We have a lot of mistakes in our past to learn from, but history is not written in vain, its aim is to teach us lessons. If we have fallen, we need to know how to stand up and fight. Furthermore we need to analyse our history so we can improve our actions and learn not to repeat the same mistakes. In this way our revolution can be set on the right course and we can finally have the opportunity to evolve as human beings. After all, that's the purpose of Anarchism.

With love, fraternity and Solidarity
José Antonio Gutiérrez Danton of *Colectivo Árbol Negro & Solidaridad Obrera*

continued next page

Sekou Kambui

SEKOU IS of Afrikan/Cherokee heritage, born in 1948, in Alabama. Throughout the 1960s, Sekou participated in the Civil Rights movement, organized youth for demonstrations and marches across Alabama and providing security for SCLC, CORE and SNCC. Sekou has been an active jailhouse lawyer and prisoner rights activist for more than 20 years.

Sekou joined the Black Panthers in 1967. While in Detroit, he became a member of the Republic of New Afrika, before returning to Birmingham, Alabama. Sekou worked with the Alabama Black Liberation Front, the Inmates for Action (IFA) defense committee, and the Afro-American Peoples Party in the mid-1970s.

Sekou was falsely arrested on January 2 1975 and charged with the murder of two white men; a KKK official from Tuscaloosa, Alabama, and an oil millionaire from Birmingham. Sekou's first trial took place on May 2 1975 in the Tuscaloosa County Circuit Court-Case # 75048818; the second trial took place on August 13 1975 in Jefferson County Circuit Court, Birmingham, Alabama-case#75032347.

Sekou was convicted on both trials and sentenced to life in both cases - with sentences to run consecutively.

Sekou has been in prison now for the past 22 years. He has seen the Parole Board

in 1986, 1988, 1991, 1995 and 1996 - denied each time and set off once again. With the exception of the parole hearings of 1995 and 1996, there has been retaliatory transfers just months prior to the parole hearing. He is scheduled to see the Parole Board again in November 1997.

Ali Khalid Abdullah writes that "it is crucial that this brotha receives support and a strong show of solidarity behind him in order to gain freedom. Therefore, we are calling upon you to step in and help. Political Prisoners of War Coalition (PPWC) are calling upon you to support this fallen comrade and help us gain his freedom. Incidentally, this brotha has written many articles dealing with the criminal justice system, socioeconomic/political arena and much more. To contact this brotha and to make your support known, write to:

SEKOU CINQUE KAMBUI
DEFENSE COMMITTEE

Att: Aysha D. Bey Kambui
827-G Tyler Circle
Hoover, AL 35226
USA

From a letter from Ali Khalid Abdullah,
#148130,
Ryan Regional Correction Fac.
17600 Ryan Rd,
Detroit MI 48212 USA

Chris Plummer

CHRIS PLUMMER is an anarchist who was sentenced to 15-23 years in jail (!) for his alleged part in a raid against a Nazi skinhead house in Texas. He has already served one year in prison. Just recently, he was transferred to another jail and has already suffered several broken ribs, a broken jaw and cheekbone, scarred eyes, and other injuries at the hands of neo-nazi skinhead inmates. His situation looks bleak and he has already come to believe that he won't make it out of jail alive. He needs your assistance now.

As an outspoken prisoner, Chris has come under fire from prison administration and neo-nazi prison gangs for his organizing work and direct action. He is currently having much of his mail stopped and the authorities are trying to frame him for having a knife.

Letters of protest to Warden Moya, RT2 Box 4400, Gatesville TX 76597 with copies to:

Christopher Lee Plummer
PP #677345, Hughes Unit
RT2 Box 4400
Gatesville, TX 76597

Rafael Ballarin libertarian prisoner

ON THE EVENING of 1/12/96 Rafa and his girlfriend Valle were walking through Madrid when they were attacked by a gang of 7 neo-nazi skins armed with sticks and chains. Rafa managed to stab one who died instantly. Rafa and Valle managed to escape but Rafa was arrested 3 days later.

Press coverage described this as an attack by a dangerous punk on some helpless students- despite the fact that they were all members of an ultra fascist group and have form for violence.

Send messages of solidarity to Rafael Ballarin Bergua, Centro Penitenciario Madrid 1, Av. Los Poblados s/n. Carabanchel, Madrid Spain.

For more information contact Comite de Apoyo a Rafael Ballarin-CSL, Coso 186, Spain.

Coordinara de Apoya a Rafael Ballarin, Ap. 184, Huesca, Spain.

Judicial murder of 13 year old

NORTH AMERICA over the last decade has embarked on a program of incarcerating its youth in adult facilities and bootcamps. This is the answer to social problems created by capitalism that the US State proposes. In addition

various states have passed legislation allowing courts to try children and teenagers on capital crimes for which they can receive the death penalty. At present a 13 year old boy who is mentally retarded awaits execution in Alabama's electric chair. He was wrongly convicted of murder. His name is Michael Shan Barnes and he is kept in harsh conditions on death row and fed a poor diet. He needs our support urgently.

Please write to : Alabama State Governor Fob James Jr, State Capitol N-104, 600 Dexter Avenue, Montgomery, Alabama, 36130, USA.

Voice your outrage. You might mention Michael's age, mental state, compassion, mercy.

continued from previous page

PS; we're particularly interested in contacting exiled libertarians..... if you're one please contact us.

Black Flag note: this is an edited version - please send us a SAE for a full version including all names of groups and journals.

We will pass on any correspondence to our Chilean comrades

anarchism, heterosexism and secular religions

AN ARTICLE by Nicolas Chozas entitled "La CNT y los homosexuales" appears in the 1st October 1996 edition of CÉNiT, newspaper of the Spanish CNT exiles in France. He refers to a letter from a gay man in a CNT newspaper "asking us to deal more with gay issues" which makes him decide to "...clarify some points not only to this friend, but also to other CNT members who, although they are not gay, are a bit confused about these issues". Generous of him.

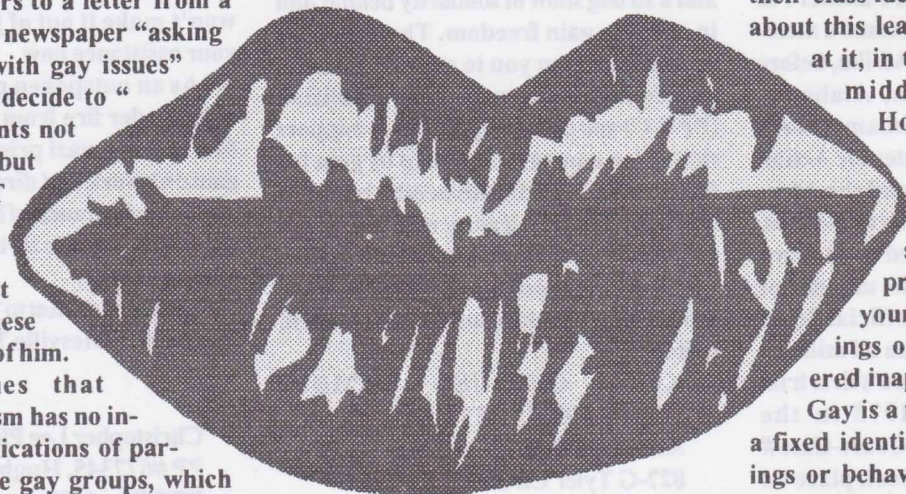
Chozas argues that anarcho-syndicalism has no interest in "the vindications of particular groups, like gay groups, which are alien to the workers' problems", and that these are "personal matters, which only affect people who feel this kind of sexual orientation".

Now, I'm one of these comrades who is "confused" because I am a worker, an anarcho-syndicalist militant, and some of my problems as a worker are to do with my "sexual orientation". Chozas apparently believes that because the CNT "is not a marginal union, or a union of alienated people" we should shut up about it. So much for fighting "everything surrounding" capitalism and the state.

Gay and bi men (my apologies to lesbians and bi women, but we are who Chozas means) are seen as somehow supposed to be separate from the working class. This is only true if to identify as gay is to be marginalised because of prejudice among working class people. Chozas implicitly accepts the capitalist definition of people as workers - labour-producing units - not as three-dimensional human beings. Society also defines some of us as gay in the same way.

The aim of anarchism is to restore our humanity, something I appreciated more when I was coming out, because realising how I was culturally excluded

as a bisexual man gave me an insight into how I was dehumanised as a worker, restoring the humanity of the working class is the business of anarcho-syndicalism.



sexual identities and class

However, there is a lot of confusion about who "gay men" are. Because the gay subculture is a reflection of the values of the Anglo-American, white, middle class men who are its most visible, economically powerful and vocal component, it is assumed that all lesbian, gay and bisexual people are like this - and that anyone who is not is heterosexual.

Gay identity politics is the project of those for whom their homosexuality is their only deviation from the "norm". For a lot of us class, race and gender are more pressing concerns, and we can't separate our sexual identity from these. Because we can't buy individual privileges, we have to live in our working class milieu - what we need is greater acceptance of sexual diversity, not better ghettos.

Personally, I am happy being "gay" because for me it describes a way I can be a working class bloke without apeing the stereotypes promoted by middle class macho journalists at The Sun, Loaded, and the like. It's about not letting my relationships with other people be defined

by gender. I'm not going to abandon my working class culture, but I'm not going to let it control me.

For a lot of working class blokes straight^[1] machismo is synonymous with their class identity, and any insecurity about this leads them to work harder at it, in the same way as all those middle class lefties do.

Homophobia and extreme misogyny - and their accompanying violence - are products of this insecurity about gender - proving your masculinity to yourself, because your feelings or behaviour are considered inappropriate.

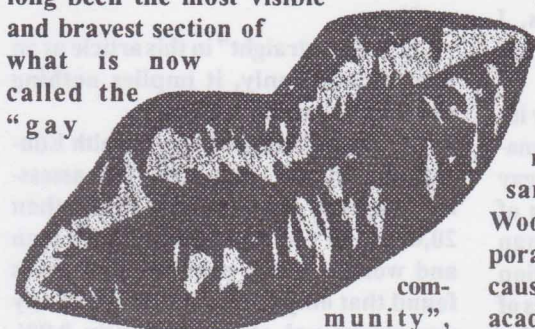
Gay is a term now associated with a fixed identity, rather than just feelings or behaviour. To be gay is to be assumed to be exclusively homosexual, and to pursue a particular lifestyle. The reality of widespread bisexual behaviour, among lesbian, gay, bisexual and "straight" identified people is erased by the gay subculture as well as by heterosexist society. Confounding the tacit equation of behaviour with identity, research by Project SIGMA^[2] into male bisexual behaviour in Britain found that only a minority of their respondents identified as bi.

Sex between men is everywhere, whether it's through contact ads in the straight press, or through cruising, which is not confined to your local park after the pubs shut or "cottages". You don't have to go anywhere near the gay scene to get laid, and straight identities needn't be compromised. Many straight men do not consider themselves gay because they only have sex with other straight men.

queens and masculinity

As well as the white, Anglo, middle class connotations of "gay", the most established working class gay identity is that of the Queen. Since this is basically a feminine male identity, it gets the low

status of all things feminine in this society. If you're neither middle class nor a Queen and you identify with your mates then you're like them - straight. A Queen is most definitely not a Man^[3]. Queens, drag or otherwise, have long been the most visible and bravest section of what is now called the "gay



community", establishing social spaces for gay men by their presence. Their visibility and their femininity have also made them the most despised by both the middle class gay men and machos, straight or gay. The masculinisation of the gay subculture, exemplified by the Clone and its successors, has reinforced this and led to gay men neglecting gender issues. Gender is at the root of the problem, nevertheless.

In reality, the vast majority of men who have sex with other men are working class, but those who are most visible and committed to a gay identity are not, except for the Queens, who have been marginalised by the assimilationist politics and masculinisation promoted by conservative middle class gay men. In Black and Hispanic countries and communities, Queens are often sex workers, so same sex love among the industrial proletariat is not a widely recognised phenomenon.

anarchist bigotry

Unsurprisingly, "workers" and "gays" are seen as separate. But before any gay anarcho-syndicalists think they can put Chozas straight (excuse the pun) just by coming out, he has more pearls of wisdom for us. "Anarchism ...is based on certain values ...constituted by the NATURAL LAWS." "Unnatural sexual acts, that is, all those sexual acts outside the heterosexual couple, (so, no threesomes either) are contrary to the essence of anarchism and rationalism."

Pope Nicolas then goes on to compare us to alcoholics and smokers, wheels out the clichés that homosexuality causes AIDS (although, this being anarchist bigotry, the Wrath of God

doesn't get a look in - it's caused by us abusing our bodies in unnatural acts) and paedophilia, and throws in a little gratuitous drug addiction for good measure.

Now, it's easy to dismiss this as the rantings of an ancient bigot, but he has a point about anarchism and anarcho-syndicalism.

Nowadays we would include gender, race, sexuality, etc. Ignorance about our own history, sanitised by liberals like George Woodcock, leads us to project contemporary attitudes back into the past. Because anarchism is largely ignored by academics I used to complacently think that, unlike the left, we didn't subscribe to the "aristocratic decadence/capitalist perversion" theory of this culture's obsession with explaining away same sex desire - I was wrong.

spanish anarchism and sexuality

Richard Cleminson's essay "Male inverts and homosexuals: Sex discourse in the Anarchist Revista Blanca"^[4] introduces the treatment of the subject in the most influential Spanish anarchist journal of pre-revolutionary Spain. I won't go into great detail, but I think it's worth citing an example to illustrate Chozas' consistency with the ideas of the time.

In 1935 the editorial response to the question "What is there to be said about those comrades who themselves are anarchists and who associate with inverts?"^[5] read as follows: "They cannot be viewed as men if that 'associate' means anything apart from speaking to or saluting sexual degenerates. If you are an anarchist, that means that you are more morally upright and physically strong than the average man. And he who likes inverts is no real man, and is therefore no real anarchist."

While by this time views were diversifying to take into account more progressive thinking about sex and sexuality in the 1930's, the quotation above is fairly typical of those cited by Cleminson. Unsurprisingly, it is only in the post-Stonewall^[6] era, when lesbians and gay men have become more

visible and confident about speaking out that they themselves have articulated a more libertarian view of sexuality.

What this clearly illustrates is that we need to take into account the knowledge of human sexual behaviour which has been built up since the modern Gay Liberation movement began in the late 1960's. Anarchism is about complete human liberation, not merely economics. We need to absorb the insights of the black, women's and gay liberation movements, and reject the heritage of 19th century pseudo-science.

Secular religions

Cleminson notes that in pre-revolutionary Spain, "The power of the Catholic Church as ideological factory of the ruling class and patriarchal society was still uncurbed. The power and influence of such ideas were all-pervasive, and it is not coincidental that much Catholic morality reemerged in the Spanish anarchist and anarcho-sindicalist movements as moral puritanism, sexual abstinence, and other manifestations of frugality."

For anarchists the mechanics of religious ideology, as well as establishing the oppressive principle of a higher authority than oneself, are about displacing the value of humanity from the self to the ownership of the non-existent God. Our atheist humanism is seen by the religious as rejecting the value of humanity, because they can not accept that a human being can be complete without a God.

Ascribing certain ideas to a God places them beyond the realm of rational ar-



gument and outlaws dissent as heresy. Certain secular ideologies have a similar mechanism. Science and Nature are as much unanswerable ideologies as God, and are supposed to similarly render any counter argument invalid. In theory anarchists have long understood this - Bakunin argued that the worst tyranny would be that of Science, or claiming to be Scientific (as Marxism does), as it would accept the validity of no dissent.

Chozas' Natural Laws are clearly beyond argument as far as he is concerned, and therefore anarchism must accept them, in spite of their obvious theocratic origins.

universalism

The secular religions of the 19th century - Science, Nature, Nationalism, Liberalism, etc - share a common mindset, a belief in linear progress and in their own Universal relevance. This Universalism (a word with a meaning not dissimilar to catholic, incidentally) is based on assumptions about the nature of humanity. Crudely, we are talking about white, middle class, heterosexual, able-bodied men as "normal" and everyone else as "abnormal".

Anarchism is about reclaiming our full humanity, from God, from Science, from Nature, from Capitalism and the State. Our social revolution is about creating a society in which we can live as humans, not as workers, or blacks, or women, or any other socially-defined category. The fundamental basis of such a society is Federalism, from Proudhon, Bakunin, and Kropotkin to the anarcho-syndicalist traditions of our movement.

"Revolutionary unionism is opposed to ...the centralism of the state and church. ...In the centralised organisation, the needs of society are subordinated to the interests of a few, variety is replaced by uniformity and personal responsibility is replaced by unquestioning obedience."^[7] To me this applies equally to Universalism, which is too little questioned. Accepting social and cultural (and sexual) diversity is a prerequisite of the human liberation which is anarchism's objective.

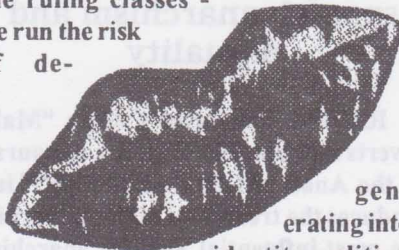
diversity

Diversity has become a buzzword with the popularisation of ideas loosely labelled as "post-modernism" - the end of a Uni-

versal worldview. While the federalist basis of anarchism should embrace this, it is important that we do not just accept authoritarian ideas in the name of diversity. In arguing that anarchists must absorb the insights of the black, women's, gay and now transgender and disability liberation movements, I would warn against an uncritical approach to this.

These movements were originally inspired by libertarian socialism, being unashamed of being black or a woman or gay in order to challenge the definition of yourself as such and not fully human ("normal"), and to seek the destruction of the social and ideological apparatus of oppression - in the same way as revolutionary socialism sought to destroy the class system which defines us as workers, not as human beings.

In accepting the definition imposed on us by society - the ruling classes - we run the risk of de-



generating into identity politics.

Radi- cal Black Power has since become Black Nationalism, supporting the black petite bourgeoisie and their ambitions, for example. All identity politics are based on a nationalist model, whether they are assimilationist or separatist. Loyalty to the "nation" is demanded, and policed.

Because of this mentality mixed-race and bisexual people are often regarded as untrustworthy among black and lesbian and gay communities, respectively, or required to modify their behaviour to fit a new "norm". Transgendered women occupy a similar position in some Feminist circles. In embracing diversity, as we must, anarchists must be careful to develop an integrated politics of liberation, not of identity.

Nevertheless, we now know so much more about human life than we did in the 19th century, and to ignore new insights into human liberation is to consign anarchism to irrelevance. The left have often limited their response to those of us who do not fit the "norms" they accept to afterthoughts, designed to "correct" these "anomalies" and to leave their political

programmes intact, untouched by the history which challenges the self-appointed leadership of their sects. We must not make the same mistake.

Peter Principle

Notes:

[1] I use "straight" in this article as an identification only, it implies nothing about actual sexual behaviour.

[2] Commissioned by the Health Education Authority - yup, AIDS risk assessment again - research into more than 20,000 men who had had sex with men and women in the previous five years found that only 43.9% identified in any way as bisexual, often reluctantly, 0.9% as gay, and 13.2% as straight. Source: Bi Community News, Issue 8, June 1996.

[3] This isn't intended to be perjorative, I'd love to be a wise old Queen, but the football, hooligan music and beer tend to rule this out - and I'd look crap in drag.

[4] Published in Gert Hekma et al. Eds. - "Gay men and the sexual history of the political left" by Harrington Park Press 1995, ISBN 1 56023 067 3.

[5] An invert was a "positive" 19th century term for homosexual, which was a medical term. The idea was that a female soul had been trapped in a male body, resulting in an attraction to men, and vice versa. Perverts, by contrast, were debauched. This is more like a definition of a contemporary Transgenderist.

[6] The Stonewall Inn riots of June 1969, a reaction to a police raid on a mafia-run New York gay bar, are the mythical beginning of modern gay liberation. Although equality movements dated back much further, the Gay Liberation Front was founded by activists inspired by this event, as well as by their experience of the anti-Vietnam War and Civil Rights protest movements. The rioters were mostly apolitical black drag queens, hustlers and bar dykes.

[7] Quotation from The Principles of Revolutionary Unionism, common to the Solidarity Federation and the International Workers' Association - the anarcho-syndicalist international founded in 1922. The CNT is its Spanish section.



kissing goodbye to their koreas

A BOOM IN economic growth since the late 1980s has nurtured a casino full of billionnaires in the advanced economic nations of the world. Since the summer of 1997 that boom has been collapsing. Whether this crash will lead to a global slump or not is unclear but the panic has already rewarded us with incredible insights into how modern capitalism now works. On first inspection it was the meltdown of the South East Asian countries (Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea etc.) which was of the greatest significance. For years these nations, built on the ruins of defeated revolutionary movements, had been held up by the world's economists and politicians as perfect model states for the West to emulate. The fans of Asian business first denied that corruption, nepotism, militarism and harsh penal systems were endemic in these countries, next they excused their presence as the unfortunate side effects of growth. Finally, with the boom in full swing, they endorsed them as features of a well functioning economy. As observers have noted these gurus, including Tony Blair and his government, were declaring their love for the "Asian model" at precisely the moment it was about to decisively fall apart¹.

Observers are wrong however if they expect the economic disintegration of Asian dictatorship (infatuation with which has seen even Maoism rehabilitated by the West's politicians) to cause anything other than momentary embarrassment. The crash will not cause any great ideological crisis for those who have earned their living praising "Tigerism". In admiring the Asian model they have simply been obeying their line-managers' instructions and lyricising the on-going defeat of revolutionary movements anywhere on earth. The glorification of South East Asia demonstrates as clearly as possible that the world's bosses would point in admiration at a burning tyre-dump and refer to *that* as the perfect model of economic progress if it were the product of a crushed revolu-

tion. It is not the collapse of the Asian economies which is causing them nightmares but the possibility of renewed revolutionary movements now emerging, and with good reason because this crash has revealed to us just how powerful such movements have become.

when the rich throw a party

The boom of the 1990s, like that of the late 1920s, has been one from which the bulk of the human race has largely been excluded. The rewards of the stock market rally which preceded 1929, though portrayed in the books and films of the time, were in reality fully enjoyed only by the rich and upper middle classes of America. It was the effects of the crash which were liberally distributed amongst the general population. All that has changed between then and now is the scale of wealth amongst the super rich and their globalization as a class. Today's upper classes stand so far above the general population that this time their economic boom has not even entered the imagery of popular mass culture. In the last decade the public have been permitted only fragmentary glimpses of the incredible party being held in the social stratosphere above them. They may not have fully appreciated the significance of these glimpses but they have been only too clearly aware of the sacrifices they have had to make in order to keep this party going. These are sacrifices in terms of lost welfare benefits, chronic overwork, mass poverty and widespread drug addiction. With world economic indicators since the final quarter of 1997 starting to point decisively downwards the public are about to suffer the hangover.

paper tigers

In the 1990s' boom the wealth of the super-rich has not manifested itself as a plethora of Rolls Royces, fur-coats or

empty caviar jars but in the form of a new commodity. The nature of this commodity gives an indication of how vast the current resources of the rich are, it is the economy of an entire nation repackaged as an investment medium, the "tiger". One would have been forgiven for thinking the world was being over-run by big-cats during the 1990s. "Economic tigers" were springing up as fast as financial journals could churn out investment supplements to invent them. These so-called tigers were formerly backward nations which, after decades of stagnation, had apparently undergone some form of magical transformation to become budding, dynamic economies. Glib explanations for how this could have happened were blithely accepted. Populations, it was argued, were now demographically younger, or more computer literate, or entrepreneurial or generally happy to accept low pay and so conditions were ripe for take off. Time and again the fact that sky-scrapers now adorned the skylines of cities such as Jakarta and Kuala Lumpur, which only thirty years before had been colonial backwaters, was cited as proof that the "Asian miracle" could visit any country traditionally dismissed as structurally weak.

Initially most so-called tigers were characterised by dictatorial military governments, corruption and gangsterism, built upon a brutal history of crushing communist insurgency with the help of Western armed forces. This formula even held true in regimes ostensibly opposed to the West such as Burma who referred to themselves as "state-socialist". According to the worker's movement of the 1960s the production of tigers sprang from a gruesome strategy. In order to escape the endless ebbing away of their profits caused by the need for state intervention in the West's economies, the propertied classes of the 1960s went scouring the earth for colonial nations to reconquer as new markets in an insanely exaggerated form of neo-imperialism. The Vietnam war was being conducted as "the first testbed of this

strategy, which, to ensure an exploitative peace, must start with a war of destruction..a long term strategy which hopes eventually to be able to write off military expenditures as mere business expenses..."

The counter-insurgency wars of South East Asia in the 1950s acted as lesser versions of this extreme policy as did the breaking of rebellious peasants by indigenous Communist Parties and military juntas elsewhere in the developing world. By the 1990s the long-term strategy was bearing fruit. The process had normalized and taken on a logic of its own resulting in a new form of super-consumerism. Any relatively backward economy could now be promoted as a potential tiger no matter where on earth it was. Following the logic of marketing and property ownership a process of global gentrification had ensued. Any nation finding itself adjacent to a desirable area such as the European Union could declare itself the next tiger. Thus Ireland massaged its growth figures (through borrowing, underfunding of infrastructure, and creative accounting), ploughed its new found riches into a property boom in the docklands of its key cities, and preposterously re-emerged as the "green tiger" of Europe. Further afield Uganda rigged her stock markets and became the "black tiger" of Africa. Various South American states rode a "bolsa" of false optimism about their prospects and became "economic jaguars".

Pride of place in all these transformations lay with the "tigerization of communism". By the early 1990s the hitherto communist states of Eastern Europe were being touted by the West's financial cheerleaders as lawless but profitable frontiers, rich in that most fabulous of resources, an ocean of low paid workers with the minds of small children. These workers supposedly dreamed nightly of the luxuries of western consumerism and would accept any hardship for a glimpse of an opulent western high-street. The new "democratic" leaders of these states (in virtually every case, either former communist party bosses or mafia demagogues) were said to be embracing go-ahead capitalist reforms. Western investors were urged to "get in on the ground floor" before these potential European Union member states took off in earnest. The Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, even Bulgaria were seriously proposed as the next booming

economies, the "Slav tigers".

the mexico land scandal

The breaking of the worker's movement and the rise of super-production caused the scale of wealth amongst the super-rich to become titanic by the 1990s. Whole nations were now being marketed to them as investment opportunities in the same way that stocks in companies had been offered for sale to the rich of the 1920s. But the utter fragility of these mythical "emerging markets" was momentarily revealed when a small group of guerillas in the southern jungles of Mexico chose New Year's Day 1994 to announce a revolution in the impoverished Chiapas region. Unhappily for international investors the "Zapatista guerillas" had been observant enough to time their insurrection to coincide with a widely anticipated rise in American interest rates. The effect was catastrophic. Bond markets (the stock markets on which countries are traded) plunged as the glamour of Mexico, a nation which, thanks to the NAFTA agreement, was meant to be about to join the USA and Canada as the next North American power economy, was suddenly revealed to be the corrupt, decrepit and over-leveraged basket case it actually was. Unable to suppress the uprising the Mexican government allowed it to rumble on throughout 1994. On December 20th the Mexican peso finally jack-knifed on the exchanges.

Consternation ensued and investors such as Chase Manhattan Bank looked briefly as if they might collapse. In their panic Chase revealed the scale of modern private property ownership by sending a fax to the Mexican president informing him that Mexico belonged to them and that as their *estate manager* he was responsible for protecting their property³. They ordered him to attack the rebels with Mexican troops. This knee-jerk reaction by the super-rich only made matters worse however, by increasing the impression that impending revolution was about to sweep across South America. Across the world currencies plummeted. Things suddenly looked bleak for the rich. And it was at this point that the International Monetary Fund mutated. On President Clinton's orders it loaned Mexico more money than it had lent in all its previous loans added together. With this action the IMF began

to shed its skin and lose its role as a post-war economic regulator to become an embryonic global state institution. This was not immediately apparent however. All that was clear at the time was that the confidence trick worked. The Mexican peso was rescued and the global investment party resumed. But the global bond crash of 1995 (following the Zapatista revolt) should have served as a warning to the rich. It was the latter-day equivalent of the Florida land scandal of 1925 reappearing at a higher economic level. The collapse of land speculation in Florida had been a warning to the American upper and middle classes of the 1920s that their entire speculative economy was on the brink of a far greater crash in 1929. It was a warning they chose to ignore.

albania goes wildcat

No nation exemplified the hyperbolic delusion of tigerism more acutely than that most ludicrous of all tiger cubs, the newly "democratic" state of Albania. Any sane observer witnessing the disintegration of this ramshackle Balkan state amid national rioting in 1991 might have had reservations about it having reformed sufficiently by 1995 to have become a budding contender for EU membership. Nevertheless, the more brutal the former communist dictatorship of a nation had been, the more enthusiastic international investors were to delude themselves about its future. Investors were told that, as in the post-fascist Europe of the 1950s, post-communist workers were now in love with the American way, reliable because they were still accustomed to harsh discipline, and cheap because they were used to low pay. No-one wanted to miss out on a potential "next Germany" whilst it was going so cheaply. And so the rhetoric which had hyped the American stock market to crisis point in the 1920s was repeated at the level of global super-investment in the 1990s. Albania duly joined the portfolio of tigerist investment opportunities. But Albania was to turn out to be a tiger too far. Because in 1997 an unexpected complication arose, Albania experienced one of the most profound proletarian revolutions of the twentieth century. Virtually the entire armed forces mutinied whilst workers formed revolutionary councils and seized 80% of the country. Suddenly all the holographic gift-wrapping paper tied around the Al-

banian leader Sali Berisha by his western backers fell to shreds at his feet. His regime (called "The Democrats" in case anyone suffered from the affliction of recognising him as a former Stalinist) was revealed to be a post-communist dictatorship smothered in mafia links. His so-called reforms were tottering pyramid schemes. Albania was still, after all, the corrupt and bankrupt "grapefruit republic" it had been in 1991. Worse, the workers, supposedly eager, would-be Disneyland tourists with lash scars still visible on their backs, were instead seen flaunting the entire apparatus of the state which they had looted to carry out a revolution against capitalism.

If the Zapatista revolt had been an alarm bell then this was an atomic explosion. No piece of fax paper or IMF loan to the Albanian government was going to extinguish the Albanian revolution because there no longer was a government. The revolution had extinguished the Albanian state. The world's investors began to panic. It took the armies of ten countries to crush the Albanian revolution and it was a close call. In the process the long planned conflict between Greece and Turkey over Cyprus had to be embarrassingly postponed whilst they pooled their armed forces for the invasion of Albania. But quelling the insurgency was to prove too little too late.

the aftermath of albania

By late May 1997 the Albanian revolution was crushed but the world's super-rich were still choking on their poolside margaritas. Suddenly all those toil-weary faces of eastern Europe ceased to resemble slave labour and looked threatening again, and this time in a very real way. Lulled by seventy years of academic analysis the world's super-rich had conveniently forgotten that the Russian revolution was originally aimed at them. Now they were rapidly remembering. As Albania's migrant workers returned to their factory jobs in Greece and Italy with a swagger in their steps the rich began to reappraise the "tiger" economies.

During the revolution the Albanian currency, the lek, had unsurprisingly been pulverized. Its forced devaluation was to become the first gust in a global

hurricane. Next in the firing line were the currencies of the Czech Republic and Poland. These dived as investors began to fear revolution in every post-"socialist" country. Even the German mark began to fall as East German loyalty to the free-market came under suspicion. Just as in 1929 the infection began to spread. In the Great 1929 Crash the first stocks to evaporate had been the most ludicrous, the "Investment Trusts", stocks whose value had been based on total illusion. But this decline had rapidly affected more substantial company shares which were in turn discovered to be deeply indebted and overvalued. History repeats itself, the first time as catastrophe the second time as abyss. The meltdown of the American stockmarkets of the late 1920s now reappeared in the late 1990s as the meltdown of whole economies. From fearing revolution investors began to fear risk of any kind, they no longer believed that the world's workers could be pushed beyond endurance by brutal dictatorships without rebellion, they now realized that the collapse of Stalinism did not mean the end of revolution but its reappearance, and they were scared. They drew a slide rule across the world's emerging economies looking for debt and instability and, in June 1997 their attention settled on Thailand.

collapse of the asian tigers

As early as April 1997 the World Trade Organization was releasing reports warning that economic growth in the "Pacific Rim" had stalled⁴. Like incredible, Cyclopean versions of the Wall Street tip sheets of the 1920s however these reports were only down-grading South East Asian prospects in order to boost those of "under-valued" areas such as Latin America. The reports merely stated that growth had "plateaued out" in the Asian tigers as they had "caught up with the West". Investors hoping for spectacular gains would now need to look further afield for riskier but more rewarding "emerging nations". But if the warnings were not serious then the crisis in South East Asia was. Behind the glittering sky scrapers of Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Seoul, Manila and Bangkok lay financial pyramids bolstering quasi-military

dictatorships armed by the West and linked to organized criminal syndicates, their economies dominated by impoverished workforces (though some now having to be imported). These were precisely the same conditions as those of the bankrupt confidence trick which had so easily unravelled in Albania, only on unthinkably larger scales. In June 1997 the baht began to fall, surreptitiously investors were withdrawing from the Thai currency. As a result of Albania confidence was waning in the management powers of any leadership, be it a "democratically elected" dictatorship, a divine monarchy or reformed "post-communism". As soon as the debt-ridden economy of Thailand came to be regarded as unsustainable those of its neighbours came under scrutiny too. The unimaginable was happening, those tigers *par excellence*, the economies of South East Asia which had, since the 1960s, stormed into commanding positions in world tables of economic growth, were disintegrating.

the crash

The period from June 1997 to January 1998 can be seen as a long, drawn out equivalent of the first two weeks of the 1929 Crash. Each rescue attempt organized by the world's banks produced a brief respite, a "dead tiger bounce" one might say, before the sickening decline resumed and spread still further. Each month a new "miracle economy" was revealed to be bankrupt and proceeded to plunge down the same drain as its unfortunate predecessors.

globalization of financial institutions

The "arrival of organized support" from the rich and their banks, which at first encouraged Wall Street to believe that the 1929 haemorrhage could be staunched, reemerged in the globalized form of rescue packages from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. And these rescue packages turned out to be just as ineffective as in 1929. No sooner was South Korea shored up with a dizzyingly huge \$55 billion loan, after it publicly declared itself bankrupt on Boxing Day 1997, than Indonesia promptly announced its insolvency a week later. Foreseeing dis-

aster financier George Soros called for the setting up of "an international body that would guarantee foreign loans and avoid a global economic meltdown". He proposed the creation of an "International Credit Insurance Corporation" as a sister organization to the IMF to "supervise international capital movements and regulate international lending"⁵. In trying to suggest ways to tide the bankrupt nations over their crisis Soros was proposing to construct the facilities for a de facto world government. As it was the enormous loans being granted by the IMF to bail out the collapsing South East Asian economies were already establishing a new, global currency in skeletal form, denominated (for want of a name) in "Special Drawing Right Allocations" or "SDRs"⁶. Just as the 1929 Crash forced the state to take over the regulation of the market economy in all nations from the 1930s onwards, so the Crash of 1997 is rapidly foreshadowing the creation of the institutions for a "global state" to regulate the total world economic system. Very soon (if not already) a belief in national sovereignty will have to all the significance of a belief in fairies and goblins.

a global depression?

Soros' fears of a world slump are germane. Every day brings new scenes reminiscent of the early 1930s. Banks crash, nations compete with each other in a desperate round of "loser's poker" engaging in a series of beggar-my-neighbour currency devaluations, the public put faith in irrational behaviour (such as handing in their jewellery to the banks in a forlorn parody of the Buddhist prayer ritual), and a marked downturn in world production and commodity prices gathers apace, just as it did in late 1929. Those who debate whether this is the start of a global depression overlook the plight of millions of Burmese and Bangladeshi workers already being repatriated from Thailand and Malaysia⁷. For them the Great Depression has already arrived. More important for us at this stage are the lessons we are able to draw from the crisis so far. Firstly the global scale of modern bourgeois wealth has been fully exposed. It is evident that trading in whole national economies has now sub-

sumed trading in individual company shares. Corporate stocks are but a mere subset of the more vast investment media which have had to emerge to cater for the titanic investment needs of the ultra rich. This scale of bourgeois wealth indicates the increasing polarization of the world's population into a mass of proletarians and a monopolistic clique of international bourgeoisie.

But this very polarization is amplifying the severe contradictions of private capitalism. As it generalizes the tensions between the mutually exclusive interests of private capitalists into a single crisis, it harmonizes the link between revolutionary proletarian consciousness and the reaction to it, an immediate retreat of capitalist confidence. This link, diffused throughout myriad local conditions in previous crises, is now revolutionized by a global capitalist crisis into an effective transmission belt. Globalized capitalism, in attempting to co-ordinate its troubled world economy, is simultaneously co-ordinating its own total negation evermore efficiently. Thus an uprising by Albanian workers is rapidly communicated around the world as a gargantuan financial confidence crisis. The theory that capitalism will mass produce its own gravediggers is becoming an observable economic fact! In their panic to resolve this problem and save their investments, the propertied classes have run blindly into the arms of a further negation. They are finding themselves having to propose the formation of structures, at a larval stage, which, if carried through would result, as Soros himself admits, in the creation of world government:

"To argue that financial markets in general, and international lending in particular, need to be regulated is likely to outrage the financial community: yet the evidence for just that is overwhelming...international capital movements need to be supervised because the private sector is ill suited to allocating credit"⁸.

We are put in mind, by Soros's comments of the analysis of the advanced worker's movement in the 1960s: "Since the great crisis of 1929, state intervention has been more and more conspicuous in market mechanisms; the economy can no longer function steadily without massive expenditure by the state, the main "consumer" of all

noncommercial production.. A relentless logic pushes the system toward increasingly state-controlled capitalism, generating severe social conflicts."⁹ That relentless logic is now pushing the system towards an increasingly world-controlled capitalism.

conclusion

Whatever the final outcome of the current crisis it has highlighted the disproportionate power a revolutionary critique can wield. If a ragtag army in the Mexican jungle can rattle the world's markets, and the mass mutiny of Albanian workers plunge it into a global crisis, we need only muse on what a revolutionary uprising in a more advanced economy could achieve. Resembling Albania in every respect except scale, in which respect it vastly out-ranks it, Russia is an unstable and historically revolutionary society. Even the ultimate revolutionary society, America, is not beyond revolutionary critique by its workers. It has never witnessed class tensions as profound as it is facing today. Who knows which society the current crisis might encourage the world's workers to seize, now that the world's capitalists have been forced to show us how vulnerable they really are.

1. "Crystal Ball Gazers blinded by the Asian Model", Evening Standard, 8.1.98
2. "Two Local Wars", Situationist International 11, 1967
3. "Did US bank send in battalions against Mexican Rebel Army?" Independent on Sunday 5.3.95
4. "World Trade Slumps as Tigers Flag" Guardian, 11.4.97
5. "Soros in Call for Global Loan Body" Guardian 1.1.98
6. "The World Coughs up to Cure Asian Flu", Guardian 1.1.98
7. "Crystal Ball Gazers Blinded by the Asian Model", Evening Standard, 8.1.98
8. "Two Local Wars" Situationist International 11, 1967

Ronan Bennett interview

RONAN BENNETT is one of the few contemporary authors whose voice speaks of authentic working class experience and whose writing takes sides in the struggles of ordinary people to determine the direction of their own lives against the forces of capitalism and the state. He's also crucially- an entertaining and exiting storyteller, able to inject a hard realism into genres not otherwise noted for their reflection of the anger, pain and joy of working class life, without sacrificing plot or momentum. His plot for the hit film 'Face' combines an exploration of what happens when solidarity breaks down in working class communities and all that's left is the chase for wealth (or survival), with a gripping thriller about an armed robbery gone wrong and bent cops leaching off the backs of the communities they claim to protect.

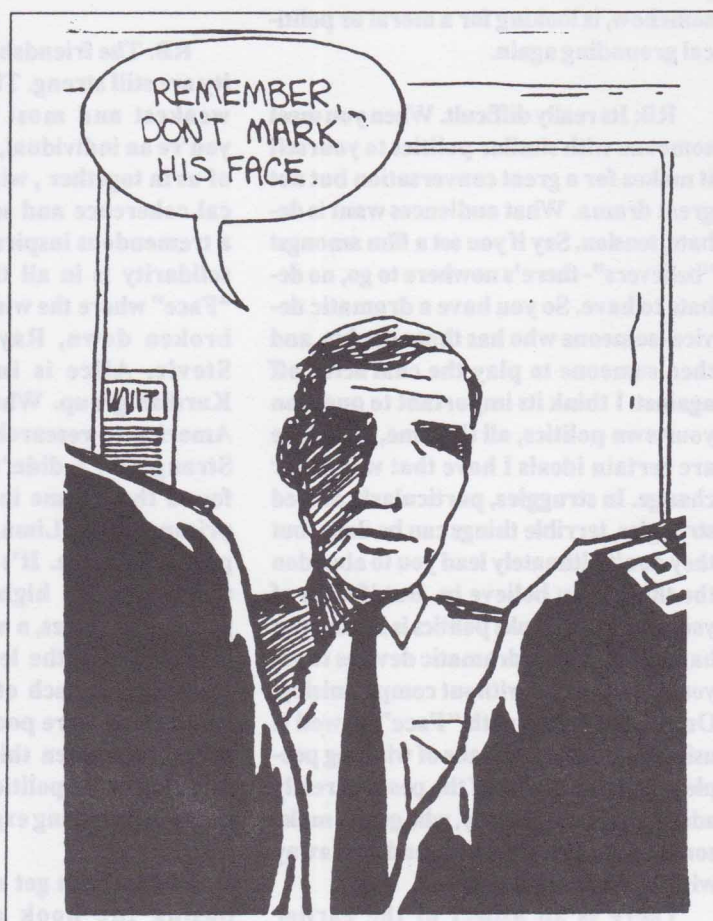
Ronan Bennett grew up in Belfast, son of a Catholic mother and a Protestant father. In 1974 he was arrested and charged with the shooting of a cop. He was convicted by a Diplock court and sentenced to life imprisonment. He spent a year in Long Kesh before the charges were thrown out on appeal. Relocating to the UK he was targeted by Special Branch and charged with conspiracy to cause explosions in the 'Persons Unknown' case. The case collapsed, but only after he'd spent a year and a half on remand. As someone who comes from a community which has been targeted as a training ground for repression by the state, and who has experienced that repression at first hand, Ronan Bennett is a partisan writer. He is also one who has not been afraid to write as a Republican socialist, whether in his fiction, in 'A Second Prison', 'Love Lies Bleeding', and his forth coming film 'A Further Gesture' or in his numerous articles challenging the prejudices and lies of the British media over the frame ups of the Guildford Four and Birmingham Six, the lies and distortions of the agenda and motivation of militant Republicanism, and the cynicism and cowardice of the British political establishment over the peace process. He's also worked to promote the work of the Dubblejoint theatre company and

Belfast writers like Brian Campbell, co-founder and editor of An Ghr Gafa, (The Captive Voice), the Republican POW magazine. In 1992 in the *Guardian* he stated, when asked how he'd vote in the General election, "Labour's record and program are woe-ful.. it has made principal in politics contingent on the latest opinion polls.. for a socialist to vote for the party would be an act of supreme cynicism. I will not be voting."

B L A C K FLAG: As someone coming from a Belfast background, who's been through jail, but has managed to get an outlet and a voice in the media, could you tell us how you arrived at that position?

RONAN BENNETT: What happened for me was after my years in the Cages and in Brixton, I went to University and did a PhD in Crime and Law Enforcement in the 17th Century and thought I'd want to teach, but kept returning in my imagination to the past, to incidents from prison, and, I think, like a lot of people, you start to jot things down, then you reach a point where you have to decide "do I go for it or not?" I think most people don't go for it, particularly people from a background where the last thing you would expect to be is a writer. I did the draft of "A Second Prison"- sent it to an agent, it was picked up fairly quickly.

BF: Did the politics of "The Second Prison" cause you any problems?



RB: No. I have to say there's politics in every single piece of work I've done. Most publishers and producers aren't concerned with politics, they're just concerned with "Does this work as a book or a film?" If the ideas aren't just there to win politically correct brownie points they'll back you. What I'm so proud of with "Face" is that the producers and the director Antonia Bird kept sight of the political and moral point but led the audience into it. I've never written from the point of view of someone who's secure or comfortable or middle class. When you're writing you can't pretend, you have to feel committed to what you do. I can't do the chameleon thing, "I'll now take the view of a middle class university lecturer". Because of my experiences I'm only really interested in the kind of characters I write about- usually idealists who've kind of lost their way. There is a conflict- the kind of politics we have demand commitment, they're about absolutes, about certainties being followed

through, but the best literature, drama is about doubt, uncertainty.

BF: That is a clear theme in a lot of your work- a central character who's lost somehow, is looking for a moral or political grounding again.

RB: Its really difficult. When you meet someone with similar politics to yourself it makes for a great conversation but not great drama. What audiences want is debate, tension. Say if you set a film amongst "believers"- there's nowhere to go, no debate to have. So you have a dramatic device- someone who has those doubts, and then someone to play the character off against. I think its important to question your own politics, all the time, but there are certain ideals I have that will never change. In struggles, particularly armed struggles, terrible things can be done, but they don't ultimately lead you to abandon the things you believe in. But if 95% of your audience thinks politics is boring you have to introduce dramatic devices to get your point across without compromising. One of the things with "Face" as well is using humour as a means of winning people over as well. One of the people I really admire is Jeremy Hardy, who gets to make some really cutting points and gets away with it because he's funny.

There is an aspect of the earlier work like "Second Prison" and "Love Lies Bleeding" that's based around parallels with the IRSP/INLA feud. Its drawn from me being in jail with Ta Power, Jimmy Brown and Gerry Steenson, they were comrades then and then they started killing each other. It hit me in a really big way, especially when TA Power was killed (Ta Power was the inspiration behind the IRSP faction that wanted to fight to preserve the socialist republican tradition of the IRSP against the degeneration intogangsterism of the IPLO) Ta was one of the most gentle but politically determined people I've ever met. Everybody liked him and to be killed by your former comrades was so tragic. I remember Gerry Adams getting up at a meeting in West Belfast and saying "We have to remember that Republicans have done bad things". He was right in many ways and it shouldn't undermine our cause. It is important not to romanticise violence or armed struggle. We need to maintain a critical perspective

on our own history.

BF: To what extent do your experiences in Long Kesh inform your work now ?

RB: The friendships and the solidarity are still strong. The idea that you're weakest and most vulnerable when you're an individual, but put a thousand of us in together , with a sense of political coherence and solidarity; that was a tremendous inspiration. That ethic of solidarity is in all the work - even in "Face" where the wider essence of it has broken down, Ray still looks after Stevie, Alice is involved with the Kurdish group. When I went to Latin America to research "Overthrown by Strangers", I didn't have a theme. I found that theme in Canto Grande, a prison outside Lima, with the political prisoners there. It's like the Kesh but the stakes are higher. There'd been prison massacres, a navy bombardment of a jail, and the level at which they stood up for each other was amazing, People who were poorly educated, who might have been thieves or pimps before they were politicised. It was one of the most inspiring experience of my life.

BF: Did you get much flak here for basing the book around Sendero Luminoso, given that most of the left here and in Peru would have massive criticisms of the way Sendero operates?

RB: Well, Sendero's authoritarianism was far too much for me. But say you're an Andean Indian, your life expectancy is lower now than it was under the Incas. If you're born into one of the Andean villages you live and die in poverty and there's no way out. You can go to the city and end up in a shanty slum. No one is going to do anything. The left parties have let you down and a political group comes along and says "fight", "Take Land". What do you do ? Either your existence goes on like this for your life and your children's lives or you just have to fight. I think as well there was a lot of misinformation put out about Sendero.

BF: What's next ?

RB: I love cinema, I love it as an art form but there are some ideas that feel

like a book. I've got a film called "Days Like These" in development. It's set in Derry between 1969 and 1972. It begins with the Battle of the Bogside and ends with Bloody Sunday. It's fast paced and, hopefully, funny and it's got lots of sex and drugs and rock and roll. Then there's a four part series for the BBC called "Rebellion" which goes from 1916 to the defeat of the anti-treaty IRA. It's about an IRA man who starts off as a Pearce nationalist and ends up as an anti-treaty communist. There's a new book, a love story set in the Congo, "Cursed to Eat Bread", which is partly about the sabotage of independence and partly about the role of the writer (the central character is a writer) and it tackles the argument that writing should not be political, that commitment damages art, which is the dominant ethos at work. I'm also working on a book about a zero tolerance campaign in the 1630's, which mirrors Howard's and Straw's sweep the poor of the streets campaign. It is intended to be an allegory for today. It's called "Havoc In Its Third Year". Its about the politicisation of law enforcement as a campaign against the poor.

BF: How do you keep your integrity as you become more successful ?

RB: Being a writer was never a role I'd envisaged for myself and the last thing I want to do is grow into a middle class respectable writer- that would be death for me politically and creatively as well. One thing is I avoid the "scene" - I don't go to Grouchos, I don't "hang out". I've got the same friends I had at the start. I go back to Derry and Belfast and work with up and coming writers in the nationalist community and you can't go back to those places without being reminded of who you are and why you started. I'm trying to encourage Republicans to get together as a writing group, to analyse their experience through fiction or films or short stories, whatever. I think people from a working class background can come through but it always helps if you see someone else break through. So you get people like Ken Loach or Jimmy McGovern, people who're writing authentically about their lives, it's a real boost for people, it proves what can be done.

zero tolerance giuliani time here?

IN AUGUST 1997 Abner Louima, a Haitian immigrant, was detained by the NYPD. While he was held he was severely beaten and had the wooden handle of a toilet plunger inserted by force into his rectum (resulting in a punctured intestine and torn bladder). The handle was then rammed into his mouth, knocking out his front teeth. He was racially abused, and, during the assault on him, one of the cops shouted "It's Giuliani time" - a reference to the right wing mayor who initiated the "zero tolerance campaign".

Zero tolerance - which involves the prosecution of every petty crime, and the removal of graffiti artists, beggars, squeegee merchants and winos from the streets, has been a licence for police brutality. Zero tolerance is about saturation policing. Its supporters would argue that its success can be shown in the 45% drop in violent crime since 1991. In reality, "Giuliani Time" has meant an increase in violent crime - but the victims are poor, black, homeless, and the attackers are cops. Civilian complaints against the police for excessive force rose by 61.9% in 1995. Abuse of authority complaints rose by 86.2% and illegal searches soared by 135%. More than half the complainants are African American. A further 25% are Latino.

"giuliani time"

When police shot 16 year old Kevin Cedeno in the back Giuliani condemned the media for not asking why Kevin was out late at night and whether he had a criminal record. The fact that police had lied in their statements, saying Kevin was shot in the stomach after a confrontation caused him no concern at all. Anthony Baez died from an illegal chokehold after his football accidentally bounced into a police car. When his mother questioned police commissioner William Bratton at a town hall meeting, Bratton told her to sit down and stop making a fool of herself. Giuliani, next to Bratton at the time, said nothing.

As Linda Grant's Guardian article (17/2/97) recognised, "The New York of Mayor

Giuliani could be the London of Tony Blair and Jack Straw."

jack straw time?

Jack Straw believes in zero tolerance. He believes "in giving city centres back to the people." He believes in getting more police on the beat on "targeted patrols" on behalf of the "law abiding majority who want to live in clean and pleasant surroundings." With 61,250 people in jail, he has ordered the building of 3 new private prisons. Since 1992, the number of offenders in jail under 21 has risen from 6783 to 10583. Jack Straw wants to use the Criminal Justice Bill to set up a fast track system of punishment for young offenders, abandoning repeat cautioning ("cautioning plus") and introducing curfews on the under 10s.

Barrister Michael Mansfield aptly described the legacy of the outgoing Home Secretary Michael Howard as "the abolition in effect of the right to silence; the increase in police powers without a concomitant, independent supervision of these powers of criminal investigation; the restrictions imposed by public order legislation on freedom of movement, association or protest; the provision of legal aid and the steady decline in readily available advice through neighbourhood or community law centres." Mansfield believes that Howard's "reforms" should be "reviewed, revised and in some cases removed" by Straw. Charles Pollard, Chief Constable of Thames Valley, has said of zero tolerance, "the problem is that sustained policing of this sort ends up targeting minorities within communities." Most of the British left have spent the years since 1945 trying to con working class people into voting again and again for ever more right wing Labour governments. The end result is a Labour government with a massive majority and a clearly anti-working class agenda. Jack Straw knows it would be easy to use that majority to rescind Michael Howard's pro-police agenda. Instead, he's kept all Howard's weapons for his own armoury and added more besides. He knows that zero tolerance targets minorities. He's

been to New York. He's seen the evidence for himself. That's the whole point.

Zero tolerance isn't about ending crime, it's about containing working class communities and keeping the poor off the streets. In New York the streets are free of litter, because welfare recipients are forced to clean the streets under Workfare and street cleaning is the only option on offer to them. Homelessness is a crime in New York. For Tony Blair, "The basic principle here is to say yes it is right to be intolerant of homeless people on the streets." So where do the homeless go? Some of them in New York went to shanty towns under the boardwalks at Coney Island. In January 1997, 3 died when a fire they were huddled round burned down their encampment, "they died like rats in a gutter", said Linda Grant. In the UK the average life expectancy of a rough sleeper is 43. But solutions to homelessness that don't involve policing solutions cost money. Linda Grant again: "Londoners want (I want, the homeless want) a better quality of life than we have had to get used to.... Read my lips. This means taxes." And that's a price that Tony Blair, low tax saviour of middle England, won't pay. If anyone still believes Labour has a reforming agenda, let them explain David Blunkett's comment that "The truth is that any government entering the 21st century cannot hope to create a more equal or more egalitarian society simply by taking money from one set of people and redistributing it to others."

According to the Institute for Fiscal Studies the top 10% in the UK enjoy an income equal to the whole of the bottom 50% of society. By 1993, more than 2/3 of income in the bottom 10% of households came from means tested benefits. By 1993, the UK had 3.9 million children living in poverty - more than any other EU member state. According to Child Poverty Action Group definitions, 23% of the population live in poverty. For Labour, the solutions to all this are clear. Capital can no longer afford the cost of the welfare state. Labour's task is to dismantle it. In its place will be Welfare to Work or....jail.

Professor John Pitts, of the Centre for the Study of Crime, Neighbourhood and Social Change, has observed "crime has grown least in those European countries where discrepancies of wealth and opportunity are lowest, or where governments have worked to ameliorate the effects of globalisation and

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thinking the unthinkable

BEFORE THE LAST election, the Tories floated the idea of scrapping Lone Parent Benefit. The newly elected Labour government was expected to restore the benefit, particularly as the new Social Security Secretary Harriet Harman had purported to be against the cut while in opposition. Instead, Labour in office has moved to railroad though the cut and has floated the idea of abandoning disability related benefits like Incapacity Benefit and Disability Living Allowance. The long term aim of Harman and her junior Frank Field is to abandon the existing benefits system completely and replace it with private insurance provision for periods of unemployment and ill health. Pundits have coded this as "Thinking the Unthinkable".

The *Guardian* columnist Hugo Young highlighted exactly what underpins Labour's attacks on the welfare state; "A greater contribution from every available citizen to improving the gross national product is the vision new Labour is determined on." The Welfare State is a drain on the profits of capital. Labour is identified as the mother of the welfare state and hence is best placed to kill it off. The attack on single parents is an attempt to test opposition to dismantling the benefits system in its entirety. It's the equivalent of Thatcher taking on the steel workers in preparation for the miners. Labour has tried to argue that they've had to accept the spending plans of the previous government, and that this cut is part of the outgoing chancellor's spending plans, but that won't even wash with old right-wingers like Roy Hattersley any more. Hattersley thinks that Labour are prepared to "tough it out" to show that "the middle classes and their values are safe in our hands... New Labour will stand firm against the debilitating forces of care and compassion." Labour can ignore Hattersley and the 47 MPs who voted against the cut to single parent benefit because the size of their major-

ity makes any Parliamentary opposition meaningless.

New Labour is committed to the defence of inequality. Cuts in benefits and the imposition of student fees are a direct result of Labour's determination to protect Middle England from the threat of increased taxation. So Gordon Brown can dismiss the idea of an increase in benefit levels as a means to tackle poverty, and Blair can defend millionaire Cabinet member Geoffrey Robertson when it is revealed that he has set up offshore trusts to avoid UK tax liability. Labour is as committed to the redistribution of wealth from poor

to rich as their Tory predecessors. "Welfare reform" means an end to "welfare dependency" not an end to poverty. The most

significant aspect of Labour's attack on welfare is the element of compulsion. When the Tories introduced the Job Seekers Allowance it was a step towards conditional benefits - a move towards workfare. Workfare is a key component of Labour's attack on the welfare state - the welfare to work scheme for young people is harsher than anything dreamed up by the Tories. It offers claimants two choices - work for benefit level wages or starve. Further, promoting a political consensus around the notion of welfare dependency allows the government to get off the hook of its failure to live up to its promises out of office. Months before the election Blair told reporters "If the next Labour government has not raised the standards of living of the poorest by the end of its term in office it will have failed". Given that Labour has committed itself to low public spending, low taxation and low inflation, job creation in any meaningful sense is not on the agenda. Restoration of the massive cuts of the last 18 years is a pipe dream. But if the poor are idle because they are idle - not because capitalism has no use for them, and if people turn to crime not because they can't live on the benefit levels available to them, but because they are

criminal scum, Blair can keep his middle class acolytes happy that his hands are clean, while Straw's "Zero Tolerance" of the poor, the homeless, minorities, can be extended to all aspects of society.

In August 1996 Bruce Anderson wrote in the *Spectator*, "We have expressly constructed slums full of layabouts and sluts whose progeny are two legged beasts. We cannot cure this by family religion and self help. So we will have to rely on repression."

In April 1997 the *Guardian* reported Blair as decreeing there should be no improvements in benefit levels so that life on benefit should be less attractive.

We should recognise that Blair and Anderson differ from each other only in degree of language, not in method. Welcome to the New World Order.

The most significant aspect of Labour's attack on welfare is the element of compulsion

(cont from prev page)

deindustrialisation upon the most vulnerable." (*Guardian* 28/5/97) Labour intends to exacerbate the "discrepancies of wealth and opportunity.", but for Straw's middle class supporters it's the best of both worlds - lockdown capitalism - not only do you pay less taxes but the streets are clean and your home doesn't get burgled. Crime becomes something the poor do to each other. Anyone who steps outside this gets hit even harder. (When working class communities in Dublin organised Concerned Parents Against Drugs to deal with the heroin that was flooding their communities, it was them - not the dealers - who went to jail. In Birmingham, the Newtown Independent Residents Association had to overcome constant police intimidation to build a successful, street based, anti-racist, anti-mugging campaign.)

Jack Straw wants it to be "Giuliani Time" here. He wants a "quiet" police state where the liberals are happy because the streets are clean and the poor are only seen through a press office promo video. The pro-Labour left are buried by history - they were cheerleaders for New Labour and therefore de facto cheerleaders for the crackdown to come. The battle in the next few years will be two-fold - to resist the criminalisation and lockdown of working class communities and resist the rise of crime within our communities, to no longer live or die like "rats in a gutter."

without a trace

"History records the patterns of mens lives, they say: who slept with whom and with what results; who fought and who won and who lived to lie about it afterwards. All things, it is said, are duly recorded all things of importance, that is. But not quite, for actually it is only the known, the seen, the heard and only those events that the recorder regards as important that are put down, those lies his keepers keep their power by."

Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*

DOMINANT CULTURE rarely interests itself in evidence other than that which demonstrates willing and enthusiastic complicity from its subjects. Acts of refusal and revolt are effaced from the historical record when they expose the tenuous control of authority. Even when they do appear, presence, motives and behaviour are all mediated through the lens of elite partiality to deny that we are capable of generating the ideas and means of our own liberation. That much most of us recognize; it is the premise of the class history developed in the sixties by the likes of E P Thompson, Christopher Hill and Eric Hobsbawm. But theirs is also a quite particular history focused on the same level of public appearance as that of the establishment. Just as real life is elsewhere than on television, so the history of resistance is at the very least written between the lines of the official record of leaders, followers and climactic events. The reason derives not just from the actions of those in authority but also from the strategies of resistance adopted by those who desire to demolish all authority. In the interests of self-preservation, the ruling class and their official recorders, journalists and other such vermin, whose social position depends upon maintenance of the established class structure invariably work to keep attention only on a protest or movement's leaders (whether real or imaginary) and particularly on those who can demonstrate the same class status. But as well as those who lack the influence to have their words and actions recognized as important, are those who have no intention whatsoever to be so identified. It is this realm of individual and collective refusal that has proved most resilient in resisting exposure.

A vast area of active political life is ignored for the simple fact that it takes place at a level we rarely recognise as political. Trained by the mass media to applaud the spectacular action rather than the functional and prudent, all is in the appearance, the image of revolt as reproduced through that same mass media. But much political activity is elaborated among an intentionally restricted public that excludes or is hidden from the gaze of authority. It is not only that the historical record is kept by elites, for elites, but that subversives themselves have an interest in concealment (and thus greater personal security and self-control) of their activities. Such acts as these were never meant to be recordable; they were successful only in so far as they were invisible. The most successful poisonings of class oppressors, for example, are those never known as such. Just like the perfect crime, the subversive act seeks to escape all detection, cover its tracks and avoid appearance in the archives: for the perpetrators to strike ... anonymously ... and so survive to strike again (only those who wish to be martyrs, self-publicists or media personalities would wish to wait around to offer their names and have their picture taken).

"A pestilent pernicious people ... such as take oaths to the government, but underhand labour its subversion."

Bishop Trelawny, 1717

Though the point, by its very nature, is impossible of proof, apparent docility is the measure of subterfuge, and is only broken by those crises of ruling class confidence that allow insurrectionary breakthrough. Our ability to capitalise on these favourable moments must be understood in the context of the development of that which is ordinarily hidden. So a view of politics focused either on the official and formal relations of power (the command performances of consent), or on open protest and rebellion, represents a far too narrow concept of political life. The body of knowledge of the past and the current which we must grapple with is for the most part a record of what obtrudes onto the public stage and from there onto the historical record. There are

undoubtedly important and instructive events and occurrences among them, which can give strength, through popular memory, to protest and resistance. But the lens of hindsight and reportage is a distorted mirror. History records what is most spectacular and most easily located: the start, the peaks, the decisive break with the past. We see the climax, the (only possibly decisive) invasion of public space. As such it implodes the development of movements of refusal and social transformation, for it freezes our attention at a single frame in time, disconnected from that which made it possible (as Dickens remarks in *Barnaby Rudge*, "We note the harvest more than the seed time"). These moments almost never come from nowhere; they are rather the acceleration of continuing processes through timely public manifestation. The agitation and preparation that precede and underpin the demonstrative act are always beginning and never end. It is at the point of certain rupture that the perpetrators of everyday acts of refusal consider it safe to appear on the public stage. Unless provoked by the State into desperate measures, open collective defiance is rarely undertaken unless it is practical and likely to succeed. Until that time, the mechanisms, structures and struggles which necessarily precede it are a closed book.

The accumulation of petty acts of defiance and refusal makes critical upsurges possible. They are not a substitute for revolution but a necessary condition for it. That it is why the insurrectionary moment invariably escalates so rapidly (and as if from nowhere) that revolutionary elites, the vanguard, find themselves hopelessly overtaken and left in its wake.

"How is it possible that so many people immediately understood what to do and that none of them needed any advice or instructions?"

Vaclav Havel, New Year's Day 1990

Ability to act in moments of critical juncture derive from the long preparation of engagement in minimalist and apparently apolitical actions.

No More False Prophets, No More Hired Tongues

AN UNDERSTANDING of previous movements for change is not merely an exercise in historical interpretation. A knowledge gained is the means by which we can understand how to take effective action, ourselves, today. When we recognise what has been, we can plan for what might be.

Movements that attempt to create a groundswell of opposition by initiating public (usually publicity-seeking) protests at the outset will often meet with a wall of general indifference (not because people don't care, but because they are a lot more realistic about the utility of such initiatives than the protesters). If they begin to engage in activity that actually poses a threat to State and Capital, they often find it impossible to sustain themselves against infiltration and repression.

The art of the possible is discovered rather in those anonymous, immediate (but not by any means spontaneous) short-run collective actions that utilise the deep traditions implicit in guerrilla warfare and can melt away when faced with unfavourable odds. Cryptic and above all surreptitious actions are best adapted to resist an opponent who could probably win any open confrontation. Spontaneous forms of popular action can be, and are, deliberately chosen because of the tactical advantages for all those involved. What might be called a low-intensity class warfare

is always pressing, testing, probing the boundaries of the permissible so as to take swift advantage of any fissures that may open up in moments of crisis. It is not that our incapacity to sustain permanent political organisation (most sensible people vote with their feet and avoid these formations like the plague) but that the choice of fleeting, direct action represents a popular tactical wisdom developed in conscious response to the political constraints realistically faced. Anonymity and a lack of formal organisation then become enabling modes of resistance, a measure of our understanding of both the danger and the futility in spectacular mediated action. While such action precludes formal organisation, it most certainly does not eschew effective coordination, achieved through the informal networks of affinity, kinship, traditional and intentional community, workplace and, yes, even perhaps ritual and religious practice. Socially embedded networks, developed at the level of the everyday, will be as opaque to the authorities as they are indispensable to subversive activity. The accelerated erosion and mutation of established social structures has been central in our current incapacity to engage in effective collective refusal. What's left of the Left has signally failed in imagination to recognize this and to foster new communities of resistance. Rather, it engages in plans for grandiose but deeply meaningless national federations (federations of what?) and equally disempowering pa-

rades before the world's television cameras.

Effective subversion must be organised out of the gaze of domination, in a sequestered physical, cultural or social location those areas that are least patrolled by authority. For those who look only on the surface of things, those seduced by the spectacular image of defiance, such strategy is a retreat from conventional class struggle. But, all things are not as they seem: as has been argued here, this is the very form that traditional class struggle has taken. The clandestine, apparently innocuous, maybe even anti-political assembly provides the fluidity and guerrilla mobility for effective subversive projection.

No Name No Slogan

There are immediate uses and gains in formations such as these: no leaders to round up; no hierarchical organisation to reproduce, no membership lists to investigate; no manifestos to denounce; no mediators to meet (and join) the power-holding elite. No public claims are made, no symbolic lines drawn, no press statements to be deliberately misconstrued and trivialised by journalists. No platforms or programmes which the intellectuals can hijack as their exclusive property; no flag or banner to which to pledge a crass and sectarian allegiance.

What concrete forms will our subversion take? The concrete forms it already takes: theft, feigned ignorance (all the better to dissemble our intentions), shirking or careless labour, footdragging and unofficial go-slow, zero-work, secret trade and production for sale (for barter, or, even better, for free), squatting, default on all payment for anything, evasion of taxes, destruction of official records, sabotage and arson, impromptu riot (for the sheer hell of it) and the detournment of state-sponsored celebration into moments of joyous destruction. If we were to undertake all this with the objective of attaining a complete self-reliance in the satisfaction of all desires and needs, we may well find it sufficient for the move from surviving within this system, to superceding it. Let the daily celebration of life be but a dress rehearsal for insurrection. It is the accumulation of small, instrumental acts that will bring authority to its knees.

Let us rise.

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burgh Claimants declare "We won't be intimidated by the police and courts. The 3 Strikes resistance continues."

In the court case the Sheriff stated that the 3 Strikes campaign was "a pre-meditated and clearly illegal attempt to undermine the operation of the welfare benefits system".

Earlier, on 21 January, the claimant had been found guilty of Breach of the Peace at Edinburgh Sheriff Court for delivering the "3 Strikes" letter. In court the Procurator Fiscal described the whole 3 Strikes campaign in Edinburgh, including the flyposting of a photo of a dole official round the city and the placing of the photo on the internet. The Sheriff (the

judge) said this was a "sinister offence" and he was "considering a prison sentence".

The 3 Strikes campaign is a collective response by claimants to harassment and benefit cuts - dole officials and their managers responsible for particularly bad treatment of claimants are given warning letters asking them to treat claimants fairly: if they ignore 2 warnings and commit a 3rd "offence" then their photo is taken and put on posters with details of their actions, and a demo is held at their benefit office.

Edinburgh Claimants c/o Peace & Justice Centre, St Johns, Princes St., Edinburgh (mail only)

0131 557 6242 Get in touch!

how do we organise?

MUCH OF THE CLASS struggle anarchist movement concentrates on campaigns: trying to mobilise people to force the government and the ruling class to grant concessions, by demonstrations etc. Anarcho-syndicalism, on the other hand, concentrates on industrial organisation. This article argues that neither strategy is doing as well as it could, and discusses a different approach. What if we concentrated on projects which gave working class people immediate benefits - for example, housing advice, food distribution, community centres etc?

Anarcho-syndicalism aims to offer this kind of practical benefit. The idea is that working class people will put a lot more energy into unions than any other kind of political activity. Unions are, at least potentially, run by and for working class people, able to win on a regular basis, etc. As far as it goes, this is undeniable.

Look at the average demonstration in your city. Is it workers or is it students? Is it democratic or is it run by (self-elected) stewards? Does anyone even think it's going to win anything, or are they just making themselves feel better? Even if it did win, would it have an obvious benefit for the average working class person? And even then, who would take credit - politicians, Trots, self-appointed leaders? Is there any point to it at all except to give the Trots a new crop of recruits? Can you imagine anyone with a job, family, not enough time and too many worries giving any time at all to the average campaign? Even with the union movement in its present sorry state, anyone can see that unionism is much more attractive than traditional campaigning to any worker in their right mind.

However, anarcho-syndicalist groups are supposed to offer real benefits, not just theory. But unionism needs a lot of people to work. Anarcho-syndicalist groups, at least in the English-speaking world, are all pretty small: too small to start a meaningful union or to change the direction of an existing union. So they can't do anything until they get bigger. So they offer theory not real benefits!

Food Not Bombs distributes free vegan food to the homeless. A lot of FNB

groups are totally independent, but there are problems. As the name would suggest, FNB concentrates on pacifism. The original aim seems to be to overcome "the violence within". This implies blaming ordinary people - if only the working class were pacifists, there'd be no nuclear weapons.

The second problem is charity. There's a definite split between the people who dole out the food and those who take it. There's no emphasis on self-organisation.

I think we can combine the best of both worlds: anarcho-syndicalists' emphasis on benefiting working class people, and the aim of eventually forming unions for revolution. And FNB's emphasis on projects which are public, immediately beneficial, and can be carried out by small groups. Some arguments against this approach are:

1. We need bigger groups. It's a bit much to expect a group of three people to start a food distribution project. However, there's no need for that. For example, one idea is to gather all the information you can on housing, unemployment rights etc, and distribute it through existing anarchist publications. Where I live, there are places which give this information out for free. However, they don't always get to all the people who can use it. So there are projects which don't need many people.

2. You can't involve the whole community and be specifically anarchist - so you have to be either a charity, a non-anarchist group, or a front group. This seems to be common sense. But I think there's a way out. My idea is for anarchist groups to start openly anarchist projects. However, we also help local communities set up their own projects and have an input into ensuring they are democratic, not a charity, not a Trot front etc. A few people will probably want to join us, but most won't (for a few years anyway). If Trots or Christians try and take these groups over, we have the experience to spot this and hopefully advise on how to stop them. So, we can keep groups specifically anarchist and spread our ideas, and yet involve the maximum number of people in a genuinely democratic way.

3. Campaigns can achieve more. It's true that a successful campaign will achieve more than a single piece of mutual aid. But it isn't a fair comparison.

For example, Melbourne Food Not Bombs has five events per week. How many groups can run five successful campaigns even in a year? And guarantee that they'll be successful, that no one will steal the credit, and that their gains won't be legislated away when they publicity dies down? None. Even successful campaigns, like against the Poll Tax in Britain, don't seem to have really helped the anarchist movement in the long run.

4. You'd be abandoning class struggle. If a mutual aid project was fairly successful, three things might happen. The state might ignore it, in which case we can spread our ideas as well as build up respect. Or the state might shut it down. The state can break up a demonstration and claim the demonstrators were 'violent', 'out of control' etc. If they did that to a child-minding service, do you think people would believe them? Or, they could try and shut it down and fail - the best of both worlds. Successful mutual aid projects *could* generate campaigns - campaigns where people would have a stake in the anarchists winning.

5. You'd be giving governments an excuse to cut services. The government isn't going to let anarchists take over providing services. The state does not want anarchists giving advice on workers' rights, how to take your landlord to the cleaners, how to avoid government work schemes etc. They don't want creches run without social workers, food distros discouraging consumerism or social spaces where no boss profits from beer sales. Mutual aid projects show that communities can survive without governments.

I'd love to lose this debate. I'd like someone to say 'mutual aid might be better than what we have now, but such-and-such is much better'. But something's got to change. Isn't 100 years long enough to test a theory? The conditions are right for anarchism - Leninism's collapsed, capitalism can't deliver, and we have groups all over the world that are small, but big enough to put these ideas into practice. We can do it now, or we can wait another century.

James Hutchings (Sydney, Australia)
email: jameshutchings@hotmail.com
(email me for information about the new practical anarchism email list).

Asian Dub Foundation - Real Areas For Investigation (RAFI)

ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION have just produced their second CD. Like their debut, it's stunning; a mixture of hard beats, guitars, polemic and a determined stance against injustice, but produced by a group of working class Asian kids and so pretty much ignored by the music press.

ADF stand out because they're political at a time when politics in music has been reduced to Oasis sipping red wine at private receptions with Tony Blair. 1997 has been the year that the music press "discovered" that Asian musicians like Nitin Sawhney and Talvin Singh were producing breathtaking, inspired music that left the average white student guitar band sounding like the redundant middle class shite

it always was. Young Asian kids had developed a network of clubs that allowed real space for creative musical experiments. But the music press refused to acknowledge the political battles that had allowed this space to exist at all.

ADF are an in-your-face reminder that Asian youth identity in the UK is a product of struggle, from the battles fought by Asian trade unionists at Spiralynx and Fords in the 70s, the self defence campaigns around the Newham 7 and Newham 8 in the '80s, through to the struggle against organised racism and fascism in the '90s. RAFI includes a track dedicated to Saptal Ram, "Naxalite"- a celebration of a peasants uprising in West Bengal, and "Assassin"- about Muhammed Singh Azzad, who assassinated the ex governor general of the Punjab, O Dwyer, in re-

venge for the Amritsar massacre.

Criucially, RAFI shows up the fact that white working class East Londoners have got a lot more in common with Asian kids from East London than with middle class wankers like John Tyndall. The "community of sound" ADF refer to isn't some hippy dream space; it's a multiracial culture of struggle - against police oppression, against racism and for self education and organisation, "against the lies you've been given". This is of course, another reason why the music press don't want to know - they can tolerate Sean Ryder or Liam Gallagher dribbling on about cocaine and smack, but let anyone come forward with an agenda which isn't about drugs or liberal "love everybody" shite - and just watch'em run scared.

ADF are great - because of what they say and because they represent the most slamming fusion of drum and bass with slashing guitars and ranting MCing I've heard yet. Go out and get RAFI.



A BULLET IN THE HEAD WONT BRING BACK THE DEAD BUT IT'LL LIFT THE SPIRIT
OF MY PEOPLE.

ANARCHO-QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Wear trousers! Her other accomplishments are more worthy of note, being the first Puerto Rican woman to defend free love, and combining anarchism and the principles of women's liberation. She also wrote at least four books, including "*My Opinion on the Liberties, Rights and Duties of Woman as Companera, Mother and Independent Human Being*"

2. He argued that Kennet, like all human beings, must eventually die.

3. They travelled the 35 miles or so over the border into South Australia, a separate state, where Mann spoke to over 4000.

4. Beatrice Webb. And to think, some people believe that Labour was the Party of the working class until Blair came along.

Dear Black Flag,

It's good to see the discussion of race and class in your publication. I would like to add a little to that discussion. First let me say I write as being an anarchist nearly 30 years and a member of the IWW for 28 years and as a shipyard worker. Thus my views are class based. But I do not view myself as a traditionalist anarchist because I view anarchism as an evolutionary process of class based anti-state ideas, not as something from the past that must be held onto. In other words anarchism must evolve. As for the question of eurocentrism. Yes, anarchism has eurocentric origins as a philosophy and movement that came out of Europe. Though it is also true that there have been ideas and movements close to anarchism throughout the history of the world, but what we call anarchism has its origins in Europe. Given the fact that there is no way that it could be without its Eurocentric influences. For no other reason than the fact that no one has yet been able to completely analyse the effects of the eurocentric conquest. The effects go beyond just domination and exploitation. They also include language, culture and our understanding of non-eurocentric ideas. I believe that anarchism can evolve into a non-eurocentric movement but to do so it must not deny eurocentrism but come to understand and dismantle it. The following are 4 areas that would be a good place to start.

1. Much of the left and sometimes anarchists deal with communities of people of colour as missionaries, saviours. This I believe comes from the Eurocentric idea of superiority. I see this a lot in the US, the idea that whites know best. This attitude can be seen in the way that white radicals are unable to hear what people of colour say to them or to write off what they say as unimportant.

2. The next area is a real sticking point. White radicals and most anarchists define their views on spirituality on the European experience with dominating churches which are part of the ruling class. They carry this over to indigenous people who do not seek spiritual imperialism and rather than stand with them, many do nothing more than continue the eurocentric conquest. I see this first hand because I have spent many years doing support work for Leonard Peltier, Big Mountain and other Native struggles. This is something that is very real. Over the

years I have never been able to get any real support from anarchist groups, including the ABC for these struggles. I have been told time and time again by anarchists that Native struggles are not anarchist struggles. So how can you hope to organise in unity when in fact you are a continuation of the Eurocentric conquest?

3. As for the question of nationalism. The first problem is the word nation. It has come to mean more than just the nation state. Here in the US it has come to mean three different forms. First there are the natural nations, some may call this tribalism. Then there are the nations of oppressed people. The eurocentric process of conquest includes the assimilation of people into the system of exploitation. That does not mean they are assimilated into one big group of oppressed people, rather they are taken out of the natural nations and grouped together. For example there is not a Bureau of Hopi or Lakota affairs but a Bureau of Indian Affairs. These groups of people become nations of oppressed people and while it is true that we must struggle against the nation state it is also important to understand that there must also be a struggle by the oppressed nations for their own self-determination. This struggle has been called revolutionary nationalism and has included such organisations as the Black Panthers, the American Indian Movement, SNCC, the Brown Berets and it has taken an anarchist form in Black Autonomy international. The last form of nations is the nation state, the ruling structure of conquest.

4. Marxists and many anarchists define what is a worker or working class struggle by a eurocentric standard. That being only some type of industrial proletarian. This leaves out most indigenous people around the world. My view is that all those that do useful work or belong to the same exploited class, regardless of whether they can find work or not, belong to the same class. Thus, the struggles of Native people against capitalist corporations is as much a working class struggle as any factory strike. And that makes a prisoner like Leonard Peltier a class war prisoner.

Yes, all oppressed people can join together around other issues, or networks that take on many issues. Back in the '80s there was a network called the survival network, in time it had a large membership with Native people and Black revolutionary nationalists making up more than 3/4s of its members. It had a state-

ment that included radical environmentalism, pro-working class and anti-statism. But the white radical, including anarchists, all but a few, would not join it or support it. At the same time another organisation came into being, Earth First!, which back then was racist, sexist, pro-USA and pro-AIDS, and white radicals joined that organisation. It is true that they led a fight against those things but still why would they not join an organisation that had already overcome those things from the start? The reason was they would not join an organisation where they would be a minority. The survival network folded because the vast majority of the people in it were directly involved in struggles, many were prisoners and those who tried to support them became overwhelmed.

So if we are to organise amongst people of colour we need to be able to make some changes:

1. We must understand Eurocentrism, both in the system of oppression and within our own movement and work to dismantle it.

2. We need to learn to hear the words of non-european people.

The reason that the SNCC and the Black Panthers told white radicals to go back in to their own communities and organise is because white radicals in the US had become debased from their own communities and thus could not offer much in the form of an alliance. Also if white radicals do not organise and educate within their own communities then the only words people in these communities hear are from our enemies. I have for years done support work in the communities of people of colour (when asked), I do not push anarchism or the IWW on them. But they know I am an anarchist and a Wobbly and many of them read the paper I work on, Bayou la Rose, and not once have any of them criticised me for what I am. The problem is that most of the time there are few other wobblies or anarchists working with me, so I am all they see. Because I do not work as a missionary, but rather in solidarity, many doors open up to me. The point is that if we wish to combat racism and eurocentrism we can no longer be part of the eurocentric conquest. Rather than being ideological missionaries we need to use our actions and organising as propaganda by deed. We must understand that self-determination can only come from the oppressed. White people are not oppressed by nation or race, thus in those forms

there will be separate organisations. But there is also the common oppression by class and the organisations in that struggle should not be separate.

Lastly the problem I have with the WSF statement and others like it is that they seek to tell people what is anarchism and what is not. Rather, all they are doing is giving one view of it. Anarchism is a diversity of ideas and movements. It is that diversity that allows anarchism to grow and that is where our strength lies.

In Solidarity,
Arthur J. Miller
Bayou La Rose
P.O.Box 5464 Tacoma,
WA 98415-0464 USA.

Dear Black Flag

I was surprised to read your apparent endorsement of Larry O'Hara's "research" techniques (BF 211). Like BF our publication Green Apocalypse was used by Searchlight in their attack on O'Hara and like BF yes we too "do have significant political differences" with Searchlight as with O'Hara himself.

Indeed I find it odd that there is so

much shock and horror about Searchlight's collaboration with the state -they never pretend to be revolutionary. It's as if generalised amnesia has gripped these called revolutionary movement. Anti-fascism was the rallying cry of the British state and its allies during the Second World War during which thousands of workers were drawn into an inter-imperialist struggle. Implicit to anti-fascism is the idea of a broad front which includes liberals, social-democrats, Stalinists -all of whom will use any means necessary to thwart social revolution. Simply revealing Searchlight's links with the state is not enough. In the end it is necessary to understand that working class community self-defence is only weakened by anti-fascism's cross class alliances.

However the chief problem with O'Hara's "research" is that he publishes half-baked theories which he does not trouble to back up with evidence. He is happy to make disgusting allegations as if they were of little account. It's as if he doesn't understand the appropriate way to deal with snouts. Severe action requires firm evidence. O'Hara is happy with the smear. When anyone dares criticise him, rather than accepting that he might have been wrong, he then smears those who have found fault with him. In fact O'Hara's poi-

son stirs up as much shit as Searchlight.

In the light of your advertisement for Searchlight for Beginners, I feel that you should clarify your position as regards O'Hara's smear of Louise Bernstein. In his section on "Spooks on the Internet" he suggests that she was involved in some operation and implies that she may have been instrumental in your comrade Leo Rosser's death, quoting Albert Meltzer's *I Couldn't Paint Golden Angels* in support of this. As things stand it seems that you are endorsing his viewpoint...

Leutha Blisset, Unpopular Books.

BF: *We don't endorse this suggestion. We think its fantasy and, sadly, has to undermine confidence in other parts of O'Hara's work.*

anarchist graphics

You may have noted some new, original graphics in our pages in the last few issues. They come from anarchist graphics, a new group dedicated to producing general graphic propaganda. They invite artists and others to write to them at:

Anarchist Graphics, Box 5, 167 Fawcett Road, Southsea, Hants PO4 0DH

They think it's all over.....

MATTERS CONTINUE to arise from the break up of the old Class War. Class War, the paper, is out again and the old federation is contactable through PO Box 467, London E8 3QX and is what you expect.

If you want to know more about the discussions and ideas raised by the "dissolution" of the Old Class War, get hold of "Smash Hits", a collection of articles from former and current members of Class War and people who are from other groups or backgrounds. The discussion groups which took place in London over the summer and autumn 1997 showed that discussion groups might not be the way forward. Smash Hits contains a good spread of views, some extremely personal. The most interesting are from the non-Class War (old or new) perspective, particularly one on local organisation from Gravesend Resistance. It could turn out

to be a useful forum for discussion. It's free from BM 5538 London WC1N 3XX. Send a donation or stamps to cover postage. There is due to be a conference in Bradford from May 1-4, 1998 to continue this process. Contact 0117 907 3667.

"Animal" is a humble new mag by people around Class War in London [?]. No. 1 had articles on crime, RTS, and Class War. No 2 was on football with a piece on the Dublin "riot" and C18 by Larry O'Hara. No 3 promises articles on organisation. With longer, more in depth articles than Class War and an independent line choosing themes rather than "news" it should get interesting. £1 from PO Box 467, London E8 3QX.

It seems likely that, as usual, the situation outside London is more positive, if "Bristle", an excellent local mag from Bristol, is anything to go by. Covers the usual subjects with a clear Bristol slant.

Check our contacts page for them and for other local groups rising from the um....ashes.

stick 'em up

From the evil twisted minds that brought you the anti-election stickers: Plans are afoot for another huge run of stickers with slogans that don't date like: "New Labour New Bastards", "The Great Royal Debate: Do we hang them or do we shoot them?", "Shoot the Suit" etc to brighten up your zero tolerance neighbourhood. 250,000 stickers will be £2000. The more money up front, the more can be printed. So: donations [cheques payable to "Active Distribution"], advance orders, better ideas for stickers, to:

Stick 'Em Up, BM Box 5538, London 5538, London WC1N 3XX.

contacts page

If you want to be included, drop us a line. We're interested in listing active groups who operate in a way compatible anarchism. Not all of the groups listed are purely anarchist.

NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Solidarity Federation (anarcho-syndicalists)
PO Box 29, SWPDO,
Manchester M15 5HW
(tel: 0161-231 8177)

Anarchist-Communist Federation
c/o 84B Whitechapel High St,
London E1 7QX

Class War, PO Box 467, London
E8 3QX

INDUSTRIAL

Education Workers Network - SF
Communications Workers
Network - SF
Both PO Box 29, SWPDO,
Manchester M15 5HW

Transport Workers
Network - SF
PO Box 1095, Sheffield S2 1NY

Public Service Workers Network - SF
PO Box 1681, London N8 7LE

Industrial Workers of the World -
British Isles, F.Lee, Secular Hall,
75 Humberstone Gate, Leicester
LE1 1WB

LOCAL GROUPS

Scotland

Autonomous Centre of Edinburgh
c/o Peace & Justice
Centre, St Johns Church,
Princes St Edinburgh EH2

Glasgow Anarchists, PO Box

1008, GLASGOW G42 8AA

Wales

Aberystwyth, PO Box 17,
Aberystwyth, Dyfed (tel: 01970-
624590)

North England

Bradford 1 in 12 Club, 21-23
Albion St, Bradford BD1 2LI Tel:
01274 734160

Huddersfield ABC, PO Box 381,
Huddersfield HD1 3XX

Lancaster Anarchist group, c/o
The Bookcellar, 9 Meeting House
Lane, Lancaster LA1 1TJ

Leeds Anarchist group, 145-149
Cardigan Rd, Burley, Leeds LS6
1UN

Liverpool Anarchists PO Box 110,
Liverpool L69 8DP

Sheffield Anarchists, PO Box 446,
Sheffield S1 1NY

Tyneside Anarchist Group, PO
Box 1TA, Newcastle NE99 1TA

South West

Bristle, Box 25, 82 Colston St,
Bristol BS1 5BB

South Bristol Anarchists
PO Box 1076, Bristol BS99 1WF

Midlands

Wolves ABC, PO Box 339,
Wolverhampton WV1

South East

East Kent Anarchists, c/o
Canterbury Centre, St Alphege
Lane, Canterbury

Haringey Solidarity Group, PO
Box 2474 London N8 0HW

Hounslow A's c/o PO Box 87,
Hampton, Mssx TW13 3TF

Oxford Solidarity Action, c/o
BM BCM 1715 London WC1N
3XX

Red & Black Club
(S.E.London) c/o BM Hurri-
cane, LONDON WC1N 3XX

South Herts SolFed PO Box 493,
St Albans AL1 5TW

Gravesend Resistance, PO Box 1,
Gravesend, Kent DA11 7NE

East Anglia

Cambridge Anarchists, Box A,
Arjuna, 12 Mill Rd, Cambridge

Norwich & Norfolk Solidarity
Centre, Unit 13, Muspole
Workshops, Muspole St, Norwich
NR3 1DJ

East Anglia Anarchist Network,
PO Box 87, Ipswich IP4 4JQ

Ireland

Organise!, PO BOX 505, Belfast
BT11 9EE

Ainriail, PO BOX 505, Belfast
BT11 9EE

Workers Solidarity Movement,
PO Box 1528, Dublin 8
e-mail: WSM_Ireland@geocities.com

OTHER CONTACTS

Advisory Service for Squatters
2 St Pauls Rd LONDON N1
(tel: 0171-359 8814)

Anarchist Black Cross (prisoner
support)
121 Railton Rd, London SE24

Legal Defence & Monitoring
Group, BM Haven, London
WC1N 3XX

do you live in west london?

If you do and your politics are class struggle, libertarian, anti-hierarchical, anti-capitalist and open minded W.A.R. would like to hear from you. They have already established a number of contacts in West London and want to hear from you: They can be contacted at W.A.R. c/o BM Makhno, London WC1N 3XX

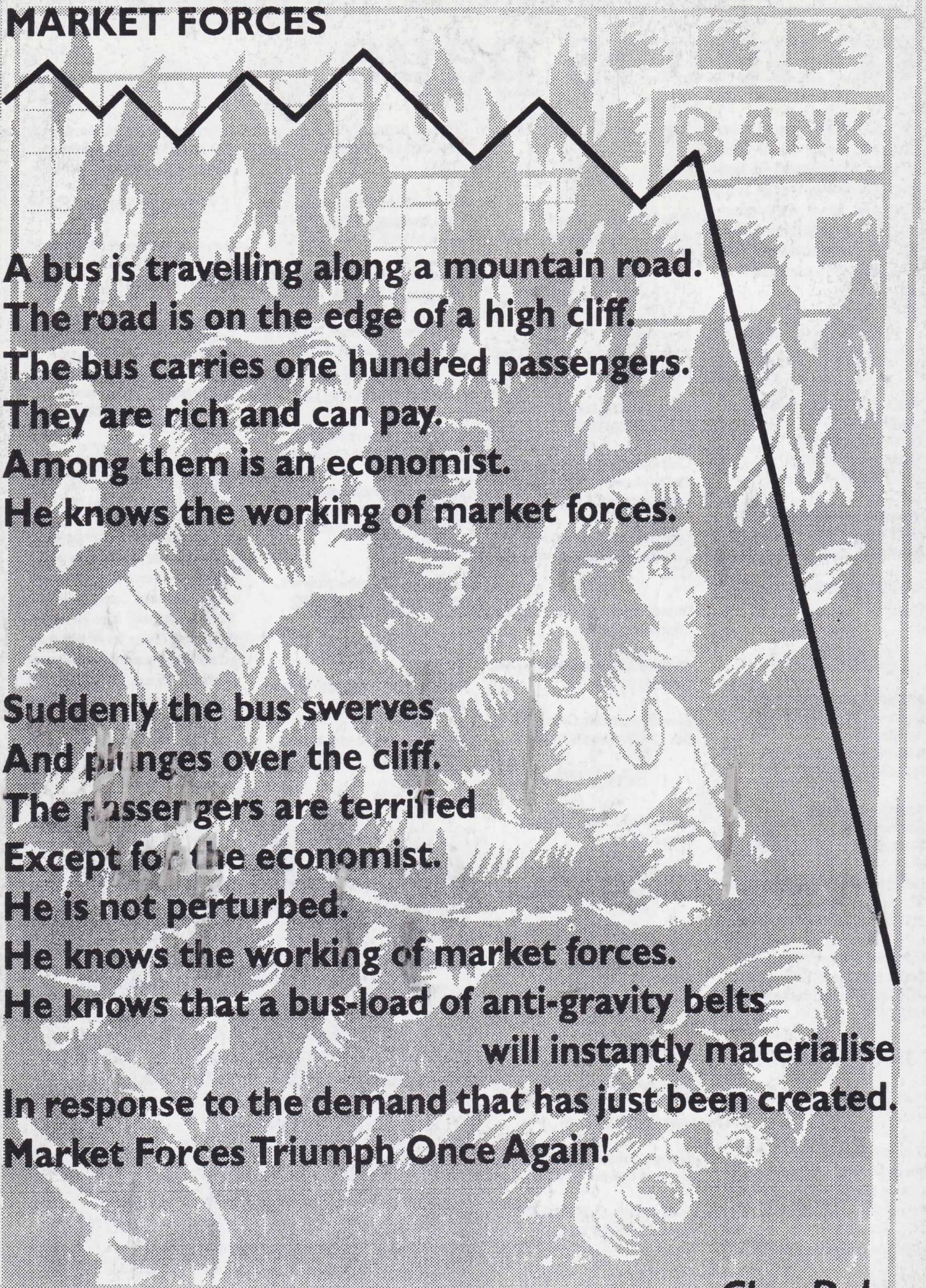
National Anarchist Meeting
Saturday March 21st 12 noon
Registration from 11am at:

International Community Centre,
61B Mansfield Road, Nottingham

This meeting has been called by anarchists from across the country who support the Independent Working Class Association initiative to discuss the following:

- What is the IWCA?
- Why are anarchists involved with the IWCA?
- What way forward for the anarchist movement?

MARKET FORCES



A bus is travelling along a mountain road.
The road is on the edge of a high cliff.
The bus carries one hundred passengers.
They are rich and can pay.
Among them is an economist.
He knows the working of market forces.

Suddenly the bus swerves
And plunges over the cliff.
The passengers are terrified
Except for the economist.
He is not perturbed.
He knows the working of market forces.
He knows that a bus-load of anti-gravity belts
will instantly materialise
In response to the demand that has just been created.
Market Forces Triumph Once Again!

Chas Duke